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1930-1980

A history of the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

Dr. James S. Band

Dedication

This book is respectfully dedicated to
Dr. James S. Band, Deputy Minister of
the Department of Social and Family Services
during the fifties and sixties.

His inspired innovations
ranged from Today's Child, a newspaper column
that found families for 10,000 children,
to legislation that changed dreary,
over-crowded Houses of Refuge
into modern, caring Homes for the Aged.

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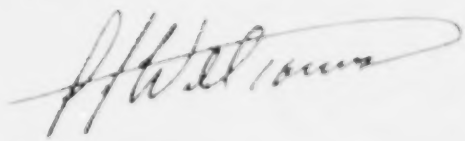
Author's preface

The history of any human organization is of undeniable interest and value to anyone connected with it. Thus, the development through more than half a century of the organization currently named the Ministry of Community and Social Services deserves to be recorded for that reason and because of its influence in society as a part of the Government of Ontario. It is timely to do so in 1984, the Bicentennial Year of the Province.

My hope is that this history will be useful to the general public and particularly to students in the field of social service and to beginning staff of the Ministry who will be better informed for the future by knowing the past. Since services to persons in need are the Ministry's essential purpose, I have attempted to sketch the growth of each major program, although in some cases this carries the narrative back well before 1930 when the original department began.

Severe limitations in time and in health have drastically reduced the research and interviewing I had proposed to do. The quality of the book must be judged within that context.

I am grateful, to the Minister, The Honourable Frank Drea, for giving me the opportunity to work on this history and, no less, to a former Deputy Minister, Dr. James S. Band, to whom I dedicate the book, for his encouragement and support. I thank another former Deputy Minister, Dr. Dorothea Crittenden, for reading the manuscript and offering helpful comments. The editor, James T. Wills, and my former colleagues, Peter Crichton and Lawrence Crawford, kindly contributed towards finishing later sections of the history. I owe a debt of gratitude to them and to all who assisted me in any way.



Clifford J. Williams

Ontario
Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

The Honourable Frank Drea
Minister of Community and Social Services

A message from the Minister

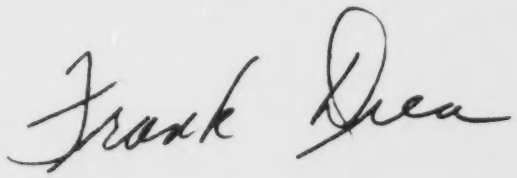
In more than 50 years serving the people of Ontario, the Ministry of Community and Social Services has met and overcome a formidable array of challenges. Born out of the Great Depression, it was so solid a half century later that it was the only institution of its kind on the continent not to have to cut a single social program because of the cost impact of the current Great Recession.

Because of its strong foundation and innovative growth, it has more than met the demands of a society whose initial thrust for social assistance was to the elderly, then to troubled youth and broken families, and now back to the elderly.

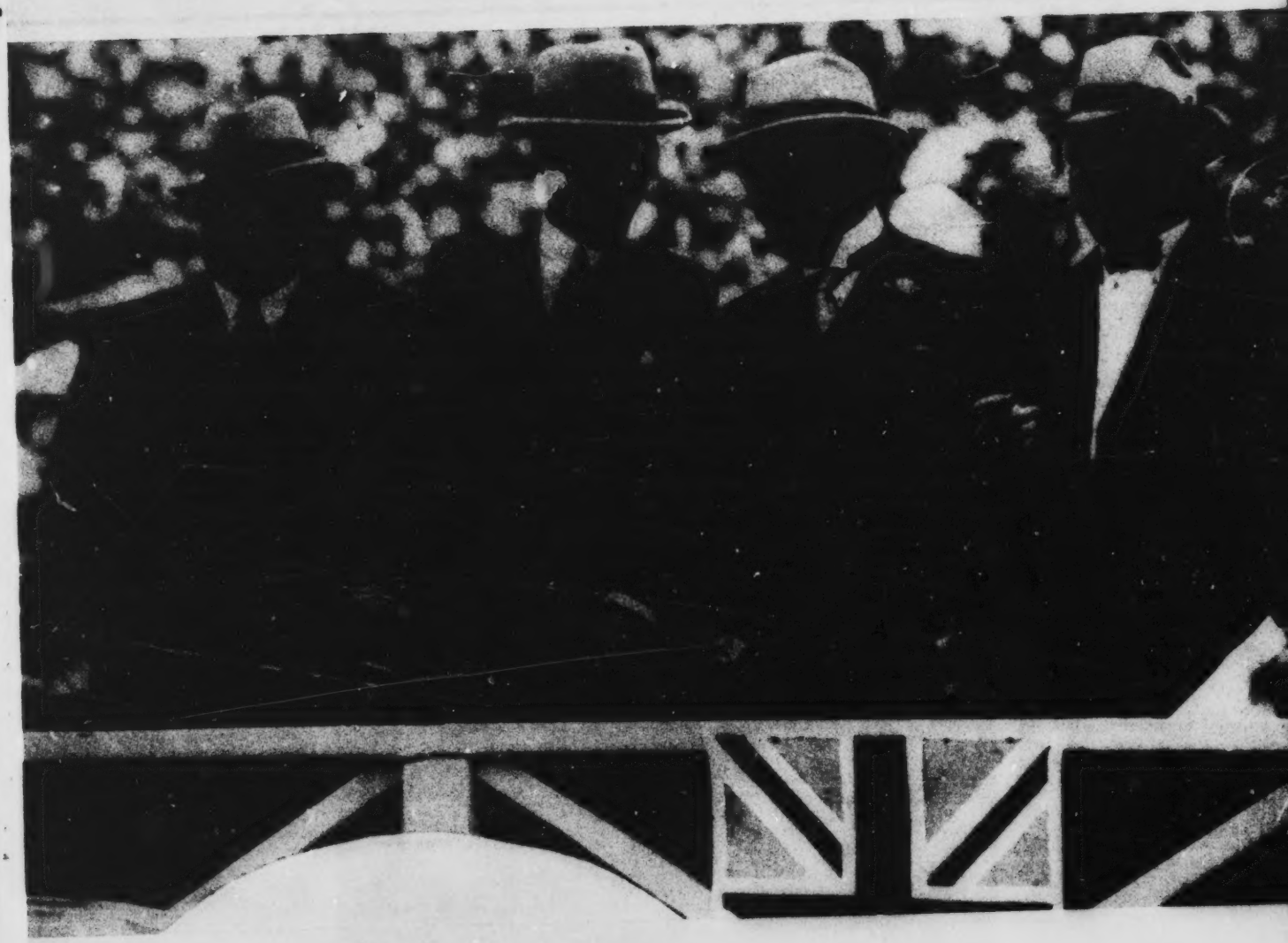
This is a great tribute to the man who shaped the Ministry, Dr. James S. Band, and to the people who have been its Deputy Ministers in recent times, Dr. Dorothea Crittenden, Robert D. Carman and Robert M. McDonald.

It has also been a challenge, ably met, for Dr. Clifford Williams to bring together the many facets of Ministry programs, policies and goals over five decades in a constantly changing society.

Dr. Williams' own experience in so many of the years he has recorded has enabled him to include the human dimension. It has, more than anything, been the talent and compassion of many, many hundreds of individuals working for a better Ontario for all that has enabled the Ministry of Community and Social Services to build such an imposing role in our social history.



The Honourable Frank Drea
Minister



Four prominent figures in the political arena during the 1930s were Premier of Ontario G. Howard Ferguson (far right) and (left to right) E.W. Beatty, President of the CPR; Viscount Willingdon, Governor General of Canada; and Premier R.B. Bennett. *(Ontario Archives)*

The Depression had relatively little effect on some segments of the population of Ontario. These women in their 1932 Auburn were not candidates for the dole. *(City of Toronto Archives)*

Chapter 1

ORIGINS OF THE DEPARTMENT

In the fall of 1930, a year after the stock markets had collapsed plunging the world into economic depression, the Department of Public Welfare was created by the Ontario Government. An Order-in-Council was signed on September 13, 1930, appointing William G. Martin Minister of Public Welfare, though the Department of Public Welfare Act had to await the legislative session in the spring and Royal Assent on April 2, 1931. Coincidence can look like cause, and we might think from our perspective half a century onward that the Department was a timely response to the economic disaster. The opposite is true. If anything, the Department came out of the prosperity that brightened the first and last years of the 1920s, when new welfare benefits seemed affordable and the lengthened list of services suggested a need for administrative unity.

In Ontario, the successive governments of the United Farmers and Conservatives reflected the public interest in social services – an interest not overwhelming in the 1920s because major political issues actually centred on the use of alcohol, electricity, timber and minerals – but sufficiently persistent to produce by 1930 new legislation and an accumulation of programs. There were the varied services of the Soldiers' Aid Commission formed in 1915 to help maintain veterans' families. There was the inheritance from the 19th century, the seventy-seven refuges for the aged and crippled and the thirty-four orphanages. There was a Children's Aid system founded in the 1890s, but at the turn of the decade it had expanded in a burst of legislation that encircled the Child Protection Act with new laws on adoption, unmarried parents, dependent children, adolescent school attendance and juvenile courts. The turbulence of the times called attention to adult and juvenile deliquency and correctional systems. The industrial schools for youth in trouble with the law were being revised in method and rebuilt in structure, while training schools for youth simply in trouble were recent experiments in Ontario. The Mothers' Allowance Act of 1920 was a new departure; for the first time the Province offered to pay permanent living allowances to a category of the poor, and by 1929 there were 22,000 beneficiaries. The second allowance program, old age pensions, also began in that year; it was far larger, far more costly, and already had 40,000 recipients, requiring extensive administration.

All these services, which we now think of as related, were then separately administered under the jurisdiction of different departments and bureaus of the Ontario Government.

"Public welfare" in the 1920s was a concept not well defined, scarcely distinguishable among general notions of public health, physical and mental care and treatment, charitable aid, corrections and reform.

The collection of these various services into one department of government, distinct and apart from the range of health and corrections programs, was an idea apparently produced in the agile mind of Premier Howard Ferguson while ruminating on the work of his Royal Commission on Public Welfare. The Department was an important, if rather adventitious result of that commission.

This investigating body, usually called the Ross Commission, saw the light of official day on September 10, 1929, six weeks before Black Tuesday, October 29th, when the collapse of stock values on the Canadian and American exchanges started world commerce on its slide into the Great Depression. A provincial election was due on October 30, and the advent of the commission had some connections with that eventuality. In fact, it was conceived in the heat of the campaign by Premier Ferguson in retort to his opponent's criticism of the government's record in institutional care. He would begin immediately, he promised, a public enquiry into the conditions of hospitals, jails and the whole range of government-supported institutions; he would consider recommendations for any necessary improvements. This was a relatively noncommittal response to a peripheral election issue, but, in truth, the Conservatives had little need for any dramatic announcements. They were going to the people for the third time since 1923 and looked forward confidently to "the largest popular majority in the history of the Province." That was, in fact, the result obtained.

With the election out of the way, the Commission on Public Welfare began its work in the fall of 1929. They were a small group, three commissioners and a secretary, but a marvel of energetic action. They visited dozens of agencies in Ontario and, for comparison, travelled to several American states, canvassing the whole field within a year. By August, 1930, they produced a printed report that was accepted everywhere.

Their suggestions were of two kinds, general and specific. They aimed first to correct the faults common to the whole area of public welfare and then to point out the particular needs of various sectors. Commonly, they found a lack of professional social work and medical services outside insti-

tutions, a gross overcrowding and absence of occupation and segregation within, all aggravated by weak government inspection and leadership with no efficient coordination between the multiple health, charitable and correctional agencies. The concomitant recommendations were that social work training be developed in quantity and quality by vigorous cooperation between the government and the University of Toronto. This would result in the employment of large numbers of trained professionals in public service who could carry out preventive work to reduce the admissions to institutions and to undertake the follow-up case work that might make institutional treatment more lastingly effective after discharge to the community.

The commission noted also that, "a vast amount of idleness exists in the jails and Mental Hospitals of the Province." They suggested, for the morale of inmates and the savings to taxpayers, that useful occupations be provided. They recommended wise discrimination in accommodation and treatment, instead of the usual conglomerate of "old or young, sane or defective, first offenders or hardened criminals, healthy person or diseased person" mixed together day after day, while at night, "In most cases, the inmates sleep in large dormitories, generally grossly overcrowded."

Although the commission found the jails and prisons to be incomparably the worst, it also stated that few, if any, of the public or charitable institutions were praiseworthy. To bring them to a proper standard and keep them there adequate provincial inspection should be laid on. Three inspectors for 400 centres was clearly inadequate; considerable increase was needed.

Finally, in order to coordinate the numerous institutions and organizations so that there would be a better disposition of individual cases and a well-woven network of services, one provincial government department should supervise the process.

Having thus dealt with urgencies common to the field, the commission went into various sectors: General Hospitals and Sanitoria, Mental Hospitals, Houses of Refuge, the Corrective Institutions. We need not follow them there except to note that they educed a long list of administrative changes and building projects, chiefly hospitals and jails, amounting to the then enormous sum of $25 million.

The orphanages and the houses of refuge, at the time such a large factor in the care of the young and old, received scant attention. But the children's aid societies were described in approba-

Philip D. Ross (left) headed the Royal Commission on Public Welfare in the fall of 1929. The recommendations of the Ross Report of 1930 became the standard for income maintenance in Ontario. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

The conditions endured by victims of the Depression were appalling by any standards. These children (right) lived in a typical slum dwelling of the 1930s. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

In contrast to the 1930s, the twenties was a period of affluence marked by elegant gatherings such as this one (far left) at the home of Lieutenant-Governor Col. Herbert Bruce in 1926. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

tory terms as "of infinite value to the province because of the extent to which in child service they combine private benevolence with Government power." There is a list of fourteen recommenations for strengthening the societies' legal and financial position. Yet the commissioners spared none of their abundant praise for the Child Welfare Branch, presided over during the last thirty-seven years by J.J. Kelso. The list ends with the abrupt recommendation, "'that the Child Welfare Branch be reorganized," at that time usually a euphemism for replacement of senior personnel.

Tacked on to the end of the 111-page Report was a one-page Section IX, "A Suggested Public Welfare Department." This was not a conclusion to which the progress of the commissioners' examinations inevitably led; it had, in fact, an air of afterthought and was expressed very much in the subjunctive tense:

> *Possibly the present Government might be strengthened by a Public Welfare Department under a Cabinet Minister. If such a Department should seem feasible to the Government, or if your Commissioners might venture respectfully to suggest what the nature of it might be, the impressions they have gained indicate that perhaps such an organization based on such lines as the following, or anything of a corresponding nature, might be useful....*

In this tentative manner they went on to outline nine branches that would gather in the Department a heterogeneous group of services covering the total field of Mental Health, Adult and Juvenile Corrections, Juvenile Courts, as well as Child Welfare, Handicapped Children, Houses of Refuge, Mothers' Allowances, Old Age Pensions and Soldiers' Aid.

One suggestion contained in the report was taken up immediately by the Premier, the idea of a Department of Public Welfare.

Formation

In the summer of 1930, a few weeks after 'The Report of the Commission on Public Welfare" appeared, Premier Ferguson decided to implement the suggestion that there be a Department of Public Welfare. It was a popular response to an aroused public interest and relatively inexpensive. The establishment of the Department was politically astute, perhaps in the jargon of a later day, a "high profile-low cost" operation. An Order-in-Council was signed on September 16, 1930, appointing William George Martin (MPP for Brantford) the first Minister for Public Welfare. The Speech from the Throne at the Opening of the Legislature in February, 1931, confirmed that, "The Report of the Public Welfare Commission has led to the creation of the Department of Public Welfare."

This was the first cabinet post for W.G. Martin, a forty-four-year-old clergyman from Brantford, who had been in the legislature less than four years. His home town paper outlined his previous career as follows:

> *Born in England in 1886, Reverend W.G. Martin came to Canada in early life and resided for several years in Western Canada. Deciding to enter the Ministry, he was educated at Victoria University, and was at one time associate pastor of Central Church, Calgary. During the war, he served overseas both in England and France. He was minister of the First Methodist Church in Hamilton prior to his enlistment and upon his return came to Brantford in 1919 as pastor of First Congregational Church. While at Victoria University he won a gold medal for oratory and his services are much in demand for the lecture platform. He received the local Conservative nomination in the Ontario election of 1926 and was successful.*

Setting up the new Department was William Martin's formidable task. Though the Premier sharply reduced Ross' suggested list of branches – all the hospitals, health services and adult corrections were excluded – there remained nine distinct programs, large by contemporary measures. The branches would be extracted from other departments after close negotiations for staff and facilities and integrated into a reasonable organizational structure. No Deputy Minister was appointed for the

first year. The Minister had a head office staff of five, including his executive secretary, W. George Pifher, and accountant, John McCullough.

During the brief two-month session of 1931, Martin was occupied by the legal moves necessary to form the organization. On March 21, 1931, the press noted that, "The Honourable William Martin, Minister of Public Welfare, introduced the Public Welfare Act which officially creates his Department and its administrative duties." This was Bill 139, "An Act Respecting the Department of Public Welfare." The legislation said little more than, "There shall be a department of the public service of Ontario to be known as the Department of Public Welfare over which the Minister shall preside and have charge." The functions were to collect and disseminate information and secure observance and executions of all Acts in regard to public welfare, to inspect any or all welfare agencies and to recommend regulations on the subject.

At the time, the programs slated to be gathered together under Public Welfare were dispersed in several departments. The Mothers' Allowance Commission and the Old Age Pension Commission shared a common staff and quarters at 43 Queen's Park. Independent bodies legally, administratively, they were in the Department of Labour.

The Child Welfare Branch was a section of the Department of the Provincial Secretary, encompassing a variety of functions. The Branch Director, the venerable J.J. Kelso, was officially "Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children," exercising jurisdiction over fifty-eight children's aid societies, operating under the Protection of Neglected Children's Act, the Children of Unmarried Parents Act, and the Adoption Act. The branch had also undertaken to collect and distribute court-ordered maintenance payments from unwed fathers. The detail of this work, explained Kelso in his 1928 report, was nearly overwhelming the office staff, while to the field staff it "presented many difficulties and is extremely distasteful."

Inspection of the four industrial schools for boys and girls assigned as delinquents by the courts was also a branch responsibility. The newly-built Bowmanville Training School for Boys, however, reported directly to the Provincial Secretary. A modern treatment centre for troubled children, it was a showplace, the pride of government.

The orphanages housing 2,700 children were also in the Provincial Secretary's Department but separate from child welfare. The orphanages embodied a concept of sheltered group-care with the advantage of secure consistency and the disadvantage of impersonality. On the other hand, the Children's Aid system for foster-home placement had the merit of a normal family setting, but this was often impermanent, and the children were sometimes used as domestic help. For purposes of inspections and subsidy, orphanages were grouped with the refuges for the aged and infirm, in the Hospital and Charities Aid Branch.

Finally, there was the Soldiers' Aid Commission, still a "high profile" program a dozen years after the war. It operated independently on a grant and reported to the Attorney General. In response to dismay at the prospect of unemployed ex-soldiers in the first year of the Depression, the Premier announced on September 1, 1930, the formation of a Veterans' Welfare Service which appeared just in time to join the Department of Public Welfare in the next fiscal year.

The first year organization of the Department shows these administrative units drawn together with few internal changes. Mothers' Allowances and Old Age Pensions continued to be administered each by its own commission under a common chairman, Doctor D. Jamieson. The Soldiers' Aid Commission remained under the chairmanship of Gertrude Van Koughnet. Appointed in 1926, she was distinguished for organizational work for the benefit of soldiers during and after the war. The Veterans Welfare Service, headed by Colonel W. Rhoades, functioned as a separate unit. J.J. Kelso continued as head of the Child Welfare Branch. The only notable change was the removal of the industrial schools from that branch. An inspectorate was set up under G.H. Buchland which carried out inspections of the four schools, the seventy-one houses of refuge, three convalescent hospitals, and the thirty-six orphanages.

The staff of the Department at its inception numbered some 175 persons. The gross expenditure in the first year was $12,171,393. Then, as it still is fifty-three years later, income maintenance was by far the largest item of cost. Nearly $9 million was for Old Age Pensions and over $2.6 million for Mothers' Allowances. The third largest area, Children's Aid, was $247,072, so that the other services shared a residue of $363,000. When the 75 per cent federal subsidy was collected for Old Age

Pensions and the 50 per cent municipal contribution to Mothers' Allowances, the net annual outlay of the Department shrank to $5,223,392, but this was over 7 per cent of total provincial government expenditures.

Welfare Minister Martin made it clear in his outline of the nature and history of Department programs that his own priority interest was in the schools of deliquent youth. He had piloted through the Industrial Schools Act in the recent session of the legislature, and with Bowmanville Boys School in operation he was looking forward to expansion through an Industrial School for Girls at Galt. His second priority was "the organization of counties into separate local welfare units" so that much of the field work could be delegated to that level. The Galt school was built and opened before the end of the Minister's term, though by 1937 Children's Corrections was to leave the Department for forty years and return in a much altered form. County welfare units would be established only after a period nearly as extensive and only in a limited fashion, but the idea of full-scale delegation was to be revived in the 1980s as a ministerial goal.

By the end of the first fiscal year, the Department was substantially formed and functioning. It was then, on November 1, 1931, that the first Deputy Minister was appointed, Milton A. Sorsoleil. He came from the Department of Labour where he had been Assistant Director of Vocational Training. Milton Sorsoleil was then sixty-two years old, nearing the end of a lifetime career of teaching and administration in vocational education. Born in Cobourg in 1869, a graduate of the University of Toronto, he had taught at the Vocational Teacher's College in Hamilton and at the Toronto Model Normal School. He attained the post of headmaster of the school before transferring to the Labour Department and was recognized as a leading figure in the organization of technical and vocational training, a field burgeoning quickly in Ontario to meet the demands of a fast industrializing society.

This aspect of Sorsoleil's background did not point in any direct way towards the office of chief administrator of the new Department of Welfare. Perhaps his qualifications appealed to the Minister's interest in the so-called "industrial schools" for juveniles where Sorsoleil's expertise might apply. But there was another aspect to his life, his firm commitment as a prominent elder of the United Church to religious and moral social development. Sorsoleil was particularly interested in vocational training for the handicapped – he was chairman of the Society for Crippled Civilians – and in the religious and moral training of men and boys through participation in amateur sports. He was immersed lifelong in church and community work.

It is sufficient to say that Milton Sorsoleil served for five years with success as the first Deputy Minister of Public Welfare. He survived the change of government from Conservative to Liberal in 1934 when so many careers were disrupted. Under two ministers, Hon. W.G. Martin and Hon. David Croll, the Deputy Minister fostered the growth of the Department with a number of progressive steps in administration and programs until it was well started as a purposeful journey into the future.

William G. Martin, MPP for Brantford, became the first Minister of Public Welfare on September 16, 1930. ***(Ontario Archives)***

The first years

The three-year period between the start of full operations in September, 1931, and the dramatic change in government in June, 1934, was relatively quiet for the new Department of Public Welfare. From October, 1929, the economy of Ontario and Canada deteriorated rapidly. Industrial production fell month by month, down 25 per cent in the first year and cut nearly in half by 1932. The value of farm production sank to 64 per cent of former value. The number of discharged workers increased alarmingly, 640 per cent in two years, so that by the end of 1933 there were 600,000 unemployed. In Ontario, per capita income fell from $549 to $310, a decrease of 44 per cent in three years. All indices described catastrophe.

The Ontario Government after some months began to recognize the implications of the economic collapse. In the summer of 1930, Premier Ferguson spoke with uncharacteristic apprehension: "I shudder to think what is facing us in this country...unless something is done to improve conditions, I believe, we are going to pass through an experience such as we have never had before since back in the early seventies."[1]

But it was not clear to the politicians what any government would do, or could do, to counter the Depression effectively. In a province and nation where business was not controlled or directed by politics, the public expectation that government should retrieve economic failure was unrealistic. None of the relevant social institutions made an effective response, as was noted long afterwards in a Royal Commission Report:

> *Canada's political, public finance and economic organizations were not adapted to deal with sharp and prolonged economic reverses. When a specific and coordinated program was required, there was bewilderment; when positive action was needed, there were only temporizing and negative policies, when a realization of the far reaching effects of the altered circumstances was demanded, there was but faith in the speedy return of the old conditions of prosperity.*

The Ontario and federal governments, after the customary wrangle over the locus of responsibility for aid to the unemployed, revived the arrangements of the early 1920s. An agreement was signed on October 2, 1930, to finance work projects; the senior governments paying 25 per cent each and the municipalities required to find half the cost. There were provisions also for provincial highway and building construction. A small sum was set aside for "direct relief," welfare issued without a work return. The program was managed by the Unemployment Relief Fund and controlled by a special cabinet committee. The long, turbulent history of unemployment relief in Depression days had begun.

Meanwhile, the Department of Public Welfare pursued the even tenor of its way relatively undisturbed; the relief of unemployment was not one of its responsibilities; the five-minister Cabinet Committee on Relief did not even include the Welfare Minister among its members.

The session of the Legislature in 1931 had seen the enactment of the Department of Public Welfare Act. Six other Acts were amended as a matter of legal form to transfer jurisdiction to the new Department. Only the Industrial Schools Act was subject to significant change; it is amusing to note that cabinet solidarity was not to the fore when the Provincial Secretary accused Welfare Minister W.G. Martin of being "far in advance of his time" in introducing the effete British Borstal system into schools for troublesome youngsters where instead it would probably be better "to apply the birch."

During the next two years, old age pensions was one of the few departmental topics to arouse the attention of the legislature. This was a novel and large program. In 1927, the Federal Government's

Milton A. Sorsoleil was appointed the first Deputy Minister of the Department on November 1, 1931. His past experience included interests in vocational training for the handicapped and in the religious and moral training of men and boys. ***(Ontario Archives)***

Old Age Pension Act had authorized a 50 per cent share of cost with any province introducing pensions to needy persons at seventy years of age. The Ontario Government was reluctant to take up the offer, which they regarded as extravagantly expensive. In 1928, Premier Ferguson estimated that 100,000 Ontario residents might become eligible at an annual cost to the province alone of $5 million. But in the session of 1929, prior to a provincial election, he introduced the Ontario Old Age Pension Act after a survey indicated that the number of recipients would not exceed 21,000. All parties agreed to the measure, although the Liberal Opposition objected to the requirement that the municipality of residence contribute 20 per cent of the 50 per cent to match the federal subsidy.

Thus, in April, 1929, any person seventy years of age or older who had been a Canadian citizen for twenty years and resident in Ontario for at least five became eligible on a needs-test basis for a pension of $20 monthly. No reduction would be made if the septuagenarian had other income up to $125 yearly, because in the Ontario of that period an annual income of $365, or one dollar per day, would scarcely suffice for a bare living. An Old Age Pension Commission was appointed in the Department of Labour in 1929 and transferred the next year to the Department of Public Welfare. The commission at first largely accepted the recommendations of local boards established by municipalities to assess applications for eligibility.

The advent of Old Age Pensions coincided with the onset of the Depression with its spectacular increase in unemployment and unprecedented demands upon public assistance. By October, 1932, Ferguson's predictions of 21,000 eligibles had doubled to 41,658 Old Age Pension recipients.

Such mounting costs and numbers prompted Welfare Minister Martin to introduce an amendment in the 1932 session, reducing local boards to recommending bodies only and placing decision-

making firmly with the departmental commission. The local people, he said, were too easy, allowing the families of applicants to escape the legal obligations to support aged and indigent parents. Furthermore, the Province would now file claims to recover pension costs from the estates of deceased pensioners. A year later, he was able to inform the House that more than $70,000 had been collected from estates, but, as we might expect, he was constrained to introduce a further bill that would prevent far-sighted applicants from transferring their property to other hands.

These restraints were popular among politicians. "Members of the legislature are of the opinion that there should be a general tightening up of the Regulations of the Old Age Pensions Act...," said the *Toronto Globe*, while representatives of the three parties cited instances of fraud and slippery dealing in support of Martin's new restrictions.

These cautious and begrudging attitudes make a strange contrast if we look ahead twenty years to the benevolence and almost maudlin sympathy of the 1950s expressed in the legislature towards welfare measures in general and the aged poor especially. The difference probably owed something to a change in social outlook, revised thinking fermenting over the great events of two decades. In the early 1930s individualism was strong. The conviction that character accounted for personal fortune and misfortune, prosperity or poverty, was prevalent. Welfare was not the wage of social justice but charity that should go only to the deserving. But the attitudes probably owed less to theory and experience and more to common human nature: the impulse to react to insatiable demands by locking up the store. In the face of the staggering welfare costs of 1933, costs devouring the revenue of government and the substance of the province, the legislators and public tended to rap the knuckles of the reaching hands and blame the casualties for the calamity. The hour of need for the greatest use of welfare service is always the time of greatest suspicion of its abuse. Reaction to recession by conservation is a long first stage in social policy before the radical action finally required to resolve the problems.

At this time, Premier George S. Henry somewhat soothed the ferment by noting that most of the aged preserved their independence. Now more than 35 per cent of those over seventy were receiving the pension, and though this was a huge number, it was a lower percentage than that of any other province.

The increase in recipients gave no respite. The annual report for the year ending October, 1934, recorded a case-load approaching 50,000, and acknowledged that, "The economic pressure of the last five years has increased the number of Old Age Pensions far beyond the first estimates."

By this time, public welfare problems were no longer W.G. Martin's concern. He had lost his Brantford constituency to a Liberal candidate and disappeared from the political scene. June 19, 1934, was polling day in an election that brought into power the Liberal Government of Mitchell Hepburn. The event was portentous for the Department of Public Welfare, as for all government services, and a new era began.

In the government of Premier George S. Henry, the policy in 1933 was not to interfere with the municipalities in the administration of relief. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

Chapter 2

THE HEPBURN ERA

"The first job is to overhaul the machinery of government," announced Premier Hepburn. "That means two things as I see it. First, eliminate inefficiency – rip out deadwood, political appointees, hangers-on; those who draw big salaries for doing little. Second, cut out unnecessary functions of government – those that have outlived their usefulness or are too paternal." All civil servants hired since October, 1933, in the last fiscal year, were to be fired for a start; others to follow. Commissions and boards were to be reduced, amalgamated or abolished, departmental stuctures stripped to stark simplicity, processes and procedures narrowed to the thinnest lines of action, extravagance stamped out. Expenditures would be drastically reduced, so that the corpus of government, pared of every ounce of fat, would weigh lean in the scales of a balanced budget.

The dismissals began at once in the summer of 1934. By the time the House opened in February, 1,101 staff had been fired. The government boasted it had already saved $1,557,000 in salaries. Public Welfare was the hardest hit in percentage terms (excepting the small Archives Bureau). Ninety-six staff were lost, probably close to half the total complement, because $96,484 or 52 per cent of salary expenditures were thus "saved."

The field staff vanished for a time. In the Old Age Pension program "...Local Boards were abolished and Inspectors released." Applications would be taken by municipal clerks and attested before a magistrate. The system was forecast to be more accurate and speedy, though after three years of experience the Department recognized that pay-out without proper supervision was not realistic in a needs-tested program.

Similarly, in Mothers' Allowances there would be no inspectors – any investigative or counselling work would be done by the local welfare officer, although local boards would be retained to recommend on applications.

A review of the industrial schools searched for economies, and the Victoria School was closed. The two advisory boards, one for training schools, one for industrial schools, were merged. From January, 1935, the training schools at Bowmanville and Galt were taken over from the private-agency administration and brought under the Industrial Schools Advisory Board, and direct departmental control.

A review committee also examined services to veterans and reported at the end of October, 1934. As a result, the Veterans' Welfare Bureau was attached to the Soldiers' Aid Commission. The commission was reduced in number and new commissioners appointed. Their direct service administration ceased when the two hostels for soldiers' children were closed and the two dozen wards placed elsewhere. The commission was now to be only a clearing house for veterans' requests with authority to issue minor emergency aid. The staff was reduced to seven persons.

The Child Welfare Branch had come under a cloud of doubt when two investigations, one of the York Children's Aid Society and one of the Society at Windsor, revealed faulty administration.

J.J. Kelso, Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children for forty-one years was superannuated in July, 1934, along with his inspector of thirty-five years, William O'Connor. Kelso, the founder and builder of the Children's Aid system in Ontario (see Chapter 3), had been seriously ill since the Department's formation and was virtually in retirement, but the abruptness of his send-off saddened the last year of his life. The new branch head was B.W. Heise, appointed in June, 1934, former Superintendent of the Hamilton Society. Heise began to draw up new regulations which graded societies according to their efficiency and the qualifications of staff, prescribed standard organization and records, and provided for stricter provincial inspection. The provincial payments for the

local superintendent's salary were terminated and a grant substituted varied according to the society's grade. These grants were not large, from $500 to $2,000 yearly. The bulk of society expenditures came from municipal mandatory payments, the rest from private funds.

The orphanages, with their 5,000 children in residence, were at last brought under Child Welfare jurisdiction and into relation with children's aid societies. "A marked change in the attitude of the Department" toward these institutions was announced in the annual report. Hereafter, orphanages would hold children for only a limited time, and all efforts would be made toward foster-home placement or adoption.

The heavy hand of retrenchment upon public welfare at the nadir of economic depression was perhaps powered more by the Premier than by the new Minister, Hon. David A. Croll. When, on July 10, 1934, Croll was sworn in as Minister of Public Welfare and of Municipal Affairs, he began a famous and honourable career in government of a half-century and more devoted to the interests of social services and labour. He is best known to the public today as Senator Croll, Chairman of the Special Senate Committee that published *Poverty in Canada* in 1971. The book's examination of the subject and recommendation for a "guaranteed annual income" excited more popular and professional discussion than any other document in the Senate's history.

David Croll's long career in public life began in 1930 when, as a thirty-year-old lawyer, he won a three-year term as Mayor of Windsor. He proceeded to reorganize the City Relief Department, to initiate public works projects for the unemployed and to tour northern Ontario, evaluating the "back to the land" program as a Depression initiative.

Immediately after his election in June, 1934, as a provincial member for Windsor-Walkerville, he joined Mitchell Hepburn and Arthur Roebuck in the triumvirate of top influence in the Liberal Government. From July, 1934, to April, 1937, he held the two portfolios of Public Welfare and Municipal Affairs to which he added a third, Labour, in 1935. Thus, he was ostensibly the Minister responsible when the aggressive American-based labour group, the Committee for Industrial Organization, recruited workers in the General Motors plant at Oshawa and instigated a prolonged strike. But Hepburn, easily the most volatile and contentious of our provincial premiers, took all the initiative from Croll's hands. The Premier threatened drastic action with police and soldiers. It was too much for David Croll who stated in a remembered phrase that he would, "rather march with the workers than ride with General Motors." Attorney General Arthur Roebuck also indicated a lack of enthusiasm for repressive measures. On April 15, 1937, Hepburn demanded and received the resignations of his two chief colleagues.

Croll continued to sit in the legislature for Windsor-Walkerville and held his seat through the 1937 and 1943 elections. He then startled public opinion by enlisting at the rank of private soldier in the Essex Scottish Regiment. He was very soon commissioned, and by the end of the war he was a

Immediately after his election in 1934, David Croll joined Mitchell Hepburn and Arthur Roebuck in the triumvirate of top influence in the Liberal Government. Croll was Minister of Public Welfare from 1934 until 1937. ***(Ontario Archives)***

Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1945, Croll turned to federal politics and won election that year to the House of Commons in which he served ten years. In 1955, he was appointed to the Senate, and his career culminated in the publication of *Poverty in Canada*.

But these events were all in the future in 1934 when Croll, with Deputy Minister Sorsoleil, carried through the reorganization of the Department of Public Welfare. For the first time, the Department was brought into close relationship with the Unemployment Relief program, a momentous step, because relief was far and away the most costly and controversial government activity of the 1930s.

Relieving unemployment had not at first been conceived as a welfare type of endeavour. In the first two years of the Depression decade most of the money was spent to create jobs on capital works. The doling out of sustenance and supplies to the needy jobless was a supplementary, relatively minor activity. Thus, it seemed appropriate that the chairman of the cabinet committee dispensing the funds should be the Minister of Labour and Public Works. But the municipalities were the main bearers of the relief burden at the time, and as they began to sag and sometimes to break under the strain the Department of Municipal Affairs entered more prominently into relief problems. Concurrently, the awareness grew that supplying work and wages was much more expensive than "direct relief" or the dole, and that, admittedly, was a welfare function. It was for the purpose of coordination that David Croll held the three portfolios of Labour, Municipal Affairs and Public Welfare, and he administered unemployment relief as an interdepartmental concern.

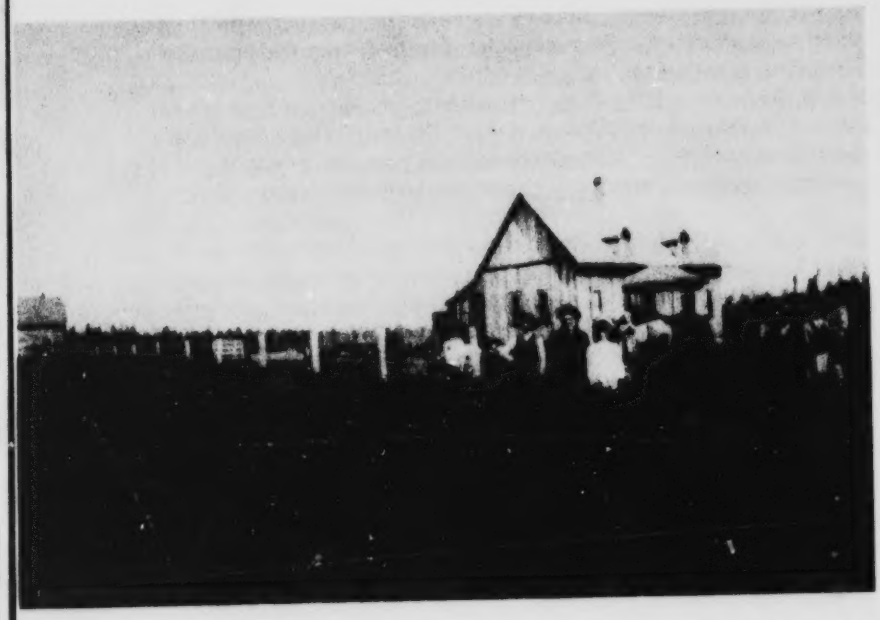
Because unemployment relief became, from 1934, increasingly identified with the Department of Public Welfare, and fifty years later their successors and assigns remain integrated, this program is an important period of the history of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Unemployment relief

From the beginning of settlement in what is now Ontario, there had been, as in any 19th century society, an indeterminate but significant number of people who were destitute, or nearly so. Many original settlers were so bereft of resources that they could not have succeeded without government assistance. The United Empire Loyalists and others who arrived at the beginning of the century, and even those who came as late as the 1840s, received from government not only land grants, farm stock and equipment, but also substantial issues of food and other supplies to tide them over the first precarious years. But by mid-century the primary settlement of the province had been accomplished, and there remained no provision for casual assistance to families or impoverished groups. The government of the United Province of Canada had no legislation for "outdoor relief," and provincial officials usually either disregarded such efforts by municipalities or viewed them with disfavour. The provincial policy, so far as any policy can be discerned, preferred the establishment of the work house and farm system where "indoor relief" would be dispensed in return for labour from able-bodied paupers. This was the method most in accord with the political thinking of the time.

But it was not a method suitable to the actualities of the new province. The rural municipalities of Canada West (Ontario), with their few hundred inhabitants and rudimentary organization, were unlikely to develop so large and costly a structure as a poor house, and for such a trifling purpose. That was far beyond the social need, which was merely to lend a helping hand to a few families down on their luck or to rescue some penniless local character from the extremes of want. The establishment of poor houses was only practical and necessary in the larger centres of population.

What actually developed was a scattering of houses of refuge sheltering the helpless poor or, as we might say, the unemployable indigents within their walls, and also acting to some extent as centres of distribution of outdoor relief to those poor who could remain in the community. The larger number of refuges was operated and chiefly supported by private charities. Others were municipally owned, and a substantial amount of municipal money was paid out to both private and public establishments. This was typical of the city and town; in the country most local governments directly assisted residents and transients from the municipal office. Public aid-giving was more common than we imagine. In 1874, out of 515 municipalities, 418 reported relief recipients. In 1888,



From the beginning of settlement in what is now Ontario, there had been an indeterminate but significant number of people who were destitute, or nearly so. These farmers were photographed near New Liskeard in 1910. *(Ontario Archives)*

more than 5,000 persons had been given assistance to the notable sum of $100,625. It was not until 1935 that the Unemployment Relief Act specified that "every municipality shall provide relief for unemployed persons and their dependents."

For well over seventy-five years, up to the 1920s, the arrangements for relief to the common poor of the community were essentially unchanged; the houses of refuge, miscellaneous charities and the municipal offices dispensed benefits, almost always in kind rather than cash; charitable collections and municipal payments were the only financial bases of aid. It was a system less than satisfactory from all points of view. With money so scarce and cases so many, the successful supplicant must have been a miracle of desperation verified by soul-searching scrutiny. The work test was one way of deciding if the applicant was deserving. The House of Industry in Toronto, probably the largest relief centre in Ontario in the 1880s, required persons to saw wood to test their mettle, though by 1915 it is alleged that dubious applicants had to break up a crate of rocks weighing 650 pounds. Municipalities were unhappy that provincial subsidy was devoted to private but not to municipal refuges where out-of-door relief was paid and that the cities and towns that did help the poor probably attracted indigents from those that did not. In addition, the aid dispensed by various charity centres was uncoordinated so that wily paupers might collect from several sources and deserving cases would be left unserved. Dealing with relief was a difficult and thankless task.

The industrial-urban movement eventually imposed its own logic and realities on society and social institutions. One reality was that there were more unemployable people because industrial processes required a higher degree of capability in the marginal worker than in agriculture. Another was that there were more involuntarily unemployed during depressed periods of the business cycle, and there was no farm to fall back on for basic subsistence until better times. A third fact was that good times were few and far between as the Ontario economy remained in a depressed state generally from 1870 to the century's end and intermittently to the outbreak of war in 1915. An inevitable result was the appearance of a mass of urban poor, some destitute and living in city slums.

The street-side charities and municipal offices in daily contact with large numbers of needy people were moved to relieve their destitution, probably without reflecting much on the proposition that such preservation of the body might destroy the spirit and without the time or resources to offer professional counselling. Thus, a municipal system of charitable out-of-door relief persisted and developed in Ontario through to the 1920s.

Unemployment relief entered a new phase when in 1921, in a sudden post-war slump, widespread unemployment reappeared. Public attitudes had changed. The experience of the Great War

had diluted notions of rugged individualism with a realization of the communal nature of society. Government acting in a way that would express the common will in the face of emergency was now a familiar sight, and here was an immediate consideration that appealed to popular sentiment.

Veterans to whom the country owed so much could not be left in large numbers jobless and unaided. Nevertheless, the Federal Government under Conservative Arthur Meigher backed away from any involvement: "Unemployment relief always has been, and must necessarily continue to be, primarily a municipal responsibility and in the second instance the responsibility of the province."[1]

In 1922, a Liberal Federal Government led by Mackenzie King said the same thing. But the Ontario Government formed by the United Farmers of Ontario under E.C. Drury, with its strong labour component, was closer to the scene and was moved to do something positive. Ontario offered to help finance job-creating public works programs in company with municipal government. The federal authority was induced to assist. In the winter of 1921-22, municipalities received grants of $162,000, and the next winter $520,000, for use both as wages and as direct-relief payments.

In 1923, there were signs of economic recovery, and the newly-elected government of G. Howard Ferguson saw little necessity for provincial assistance to unemployment relief. But in the winter of 1924-25 conditions were bad again, and in response to a clamour for renewed assistance Premier Ferguson allocated $200,000 in provincial funds to municipalities for direct relief in kind or indirect relief in the form of public works. At the time, the Premier reiterated a familiar theme: "The view of the government is that the responsibility for the care of the citizen rests primarily with the municipality...." He added a new note; the secondary responsibility was with the federal government, because they controlled immigration and hence employment opportunities.

The legend of the 1920s – the Roaring Twenties, the Jazz-Age – recalls images of affluence and fun. But in Canada, at least, there was a surprising amount of economic gloom. In the winter of 1926-27, a municipal-provincial works program was again necessary to relieve unemployment. After that, circumstances improved, and for a few short years Ontario enjoyed relative prosperity, until suddenly, in late 1929, the Roaring Twenties ended early and the Dirty Thirties began.

Few at the time guessed at the dire consequences of the stock-market crash in October. The Ontario Government first reacted to it as the outcome of stock manipulation and spent much of the legislative session in the early months of 1930 on the details of a law to control stock brokerage. But the market shock had been quickly transmitted to the factory floor. As the 1929-1930 winter set in, thousands of employees lost their jobs. Industrial production fell 25 per cent in three months; in June, 1929, less than 3 per cent of industrial workers were seeking employment; by December, 13 per cent were jobless.

The Ontario Government shaped its action along the pattern established in the 1920s. Job creation through municipal public works was again the main palliative; some provincial building – an addition to the Whitney Block at Queen's Park for one – was also taken in hand.

Ontario, with other provinces, asked the Federal Government of Mackenzie King for financial sharing. They received a warm but not welcoming reply. In the House of Commons in April, 1930, the Prime Minister declaimed, "With respect to the giving of moneys out of the federal treasury to any Tory government in the country for these alleged unemployment purposes, with these governments situated as they are today with policies diametrically opposed to those of this government, I would not give them a five cent piece." But in the summer election the Liberals were displaced by the Conservatives and R.B. Bennett. A federal Unemployment Relief Act set aside $20 million for public works for the whole nation, this to provide a federal subsidy of provincial funds. Ontario signed an agreement on October 2, 1930, to secure the federal one-third subsidy on direct relief and 25 to 50 per cent on relief works. The first Ontario Unemployment Relief Act was passed in April,

By 1935, the Depression was a social and political reality. The long dole queues, like this one in Toronto in 1935, were proof of the rising tide of unemployment. ***(Ontario Archives)***

1931, ratifying this agreement retroactively. Meanwhile, for administrative machinery the Ontario Unemployment Relief Fund was set up, presided over by a committee of five cabinet ministers and managed by Secretary J.A. Ellis and his staff in the Department of Labour.

By the end of 1930, some 43,000 men had been employed on relief projects in Ontario and 17,000 had obtained direct relief. The Speech from the Throne in February, 1931, mentioned in its usual oblique prose that, "...in the past year difficult economic problems had arisen through the world from which Ontario has not escaped." The rate of lay-off and bankruptcy, the deflation of prices and wages during 1930, had been worrisome rather than alarming to government. The oncoming unhappy mischances of 1931 and 1932 were to ring the alarm bells in every mind. By every index and indicator, the world economy was plunging deeper towards collapse and social decline; discontent ceased to be only fuel for news stories and became for many the bitter stuff of everyday experience.

The second winter of the Depression, 1930-1931, was endured hopefully in the midst of assurances that "prosperity was just around the corner." But by May, 1931, provincial-municipal relief-work projects had exhausted the $4 million allocated by the province, and Ontario refused to advance more or to pay municipalities subsidy on direct relief after May. Spring was supposed to bring the customary upsurge in employment, but it did not.

There were jangling arguments as to the real extent of unemployment. Registration of the unemployed was carried out in August and September, 1931, by the municipalities engaged in relief works. The report was 130,000 men looking for work. The provincial government rejected the survey's validity and claimed 70,000 was nearer the true figure. There was a series of crises as the three levels of government disputed their respective responsibilities and financing.

At that time, unemployment insurance was an ideal far in the future. Relief works took care of only a fraction of the jobless. The meagre "direct relief" was not readily available to single persons or to families that retained any resources. Relief doled out under the strictest scrutiny and control took the form of vouchers to stores, tickets to draw groceries and second-hand clothing from local depots,

To many observers, the Depression spawned the recruits for revolution. Single men without jobs began to wander in thousands in search of elusive employment opportunities. Baton-swinging police halted freight trains and unloaded the transient "trespassers" amid scenes of distressing anger and violence. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

or municipal script that could be spent only in certain places on certain things. These restrictions placed maximum strain on the pride and self respect of recipients. This experimental and tentative system was different in every overburdened municipality. Despite deterrence and denial in the months from January to April, 1932, over 12 per cent of the total population was on relief of one kind or another.

Social tension was exacerbated by the fact that there was a total difference in experience between the three-quarters of the population still at work and the other quarter, the industrial unemployed, distressed farmers and ruined investors. One group enjoyed a peaceful normalcy with income that rose in real value as prices fell. The other group went through all or part of the grinding process of loss of livelihood: rejections in job hunting, the humiliation of charity, loss of property and pride, and the endurance of hardship, leading to social alienation and incipient revolt. The quarter of the population hurt by the Depression was becoming, according to temper and tenor, a desperate or despairing quarter.

To many observers, the recruits for revolution seemed to be at hand. Single men without jobs or homes began to wander in thousands in search of elusive employment opportunities, supposedly in northern Ontario mines and camps, in the tobacco fields of the southwestern counties, in the prairie harvest, anywhere but in the unwelcoming communities that urged them on out of town by whatever force or persuasion was at hand. The transients boarded freight trains in such numbers that they looked like troop trains of a rag-tag army. Baton-swinging police halted the freights and unloaded the "trespassers" amid scenes of distressing anger and violence.

The Ontario Government, impelled in June, 1932, by the need to grapple with relief in a more deliberate and organized manner, convened a committee to prepare a "Report on Provincial Policy on Administrative Methods in the Matter of Direct Relief in Ontario." The committee, chaired by Wallace R. Campbell of Windsor and composed of a half-dozen businessmen from representative cities, worked for only a month but produced a remarkable document which owed a great deal to the experience of the secretary, David B. Harkness.

Transient men, they thought, were an immediate and serious problem. They noted: "Trouble on the railways, on the highways, panhandling at doors" and the marked character deterioration and tendency to crime among the drifters. Citizens were often anxious and afraid during the invasions of these unknown and unattached men. "Your Committee wishes to state very emphatically that it views with apprehension the evidences of a steady increase in transiency and of the menaces to social well being which it represents. It advocates early and thorough action toward the disallowance of transiency...."

Acknowledging that "the average municipality carries on a haphazard and unsocial treatment of the transient," the committee recommended legal sanctions to force the transient to acquire a local residence and to require the municipality to relieve him. Suggestions for an elaborate system of "residence certificates" was a somewhat excessive idea, as was the committee's proposal for "internment farms" for those who could not settle down. But their advocacy of hostels, special works projects and, above all, the recognition that the single man was a deserving and eligible case probably had a salutory effect.

Soon after, a federal initiative eased social apprehension. In the fall of 1932, the federal government evidently discerned the same dangers and inaugurated a large scheme of Dominion Unemployment Relief Camps in remote locations, each housing a hundred or more unattached men who worked on highway construction for room and board and 20¢ per day. Significantly, the camps were operated by the Department of National Defence under the Chief of Staff, A.G.J. MacNaughton.

Although the Campbell Committee paid homage to "the long established view that direct relief is primarily and properly a duty of the municipal organization...," they asserted that the long-continuing present emergency required specific provincial intervention.

The committee's terms of reference included the task of examining and making recommendations concerning those municipalities whose unemployment-relief costs were pushing them towards bankruptcy. The legislation permitted municipalities to borrow for welfare purposes, but already prominent urban municipal corporations were defaulting on the interest payments of these debentures. The basic flaw in the doctrine of municipal responsibility for welfare was the absence of any local "poor rate" system that would have enabled the municipality to tax in anticipation of welfare

costs or to levy more widely beyond the "real property" base. Tax income from that base was shrinking quickly, while costs ballooned beyond all manageable proportions, so that municipal finances were toppling under the strain.

The committee could find little to say about this fundamental difficulty other than that the province must take over funding and, preferably, management too, in the defaulting municipalities. By then, it was understood that municipalities generally should abandon the policy of job creation through public works. The Campbell Committee "accepts the view which it believes widely prevails, that all normal governmental works enterprises should be disassociated from relief planning and administration." A large proportion of public works' cost was for material and capital items which did little or nothing directly to relieve local unemployment. Wages, the other large item, were paid at normal rates, so that relatively few jobs were provided and these at high public expense. Direct relief, it was realized, was a far cheaper method. Food, clothing, shelter, fuel and medical services could be supplied at a low cost per case, something less than half or perhaps one-third of a worker's normal pay. But no one could reconcile himself to the idea that these rations should be given for nothing. "It is unthinkable," said the head of the School of Social Work that, "we should resign ourselves to the development of a huge dole system whereby the unemployed receive charity from public or private sources without doing anything for themselves, and without any return to the community." At about the same time, the Campbell Committee was pointing out the value of work for welfare as a "quid pro quo for the relief issued" and "a means of sustaining morale." Thus "relief works" where the recipient laboured for the relief issued began to appear. These were distinguished from "public works" where normal wages had been paid. For two or three years afterwards, the unemployment relief program featured such relief works, until the supposed advantages of make-work projects with underpaid labour began to be perceived as largely another illusion.

The lasting value of the Campbell Committee chiefly derived from the standards they set for relief issuances and costs. They drew up a list of essential items that defined what direct relief was, and they established the maximum expenditures per person and family. There had been "a notable lack of conformity in the ideas of the municipalities as to what constitutes adequate relief." The report set out to remedy this with a fixed schedule of food allowances and a flexible means of calculating other needs.

The rates published were presented as the maximum amounts upon which the Province would pay subsidy; they eventually hardened into law, and in the future there would be frustration between the Province and some municipalities when "the scale of the Campbell Report" was exceeded.

The report was a notable step forward in developing a measure of uniformity among municipal programs and introducing a new relationship of mutual accountability between the welfare services of the municipalities and the Province. Its influence was enduring, and seven years later the standards of new relief rates were officially described by the Minister of Welfare as being "25 per cent above the Campbell Report."

There was at first some retreat even from these tentative advances. Responding to an Opposition complaint in 1933 that one municipality required recipients to sign a promise to repay relief and most places impounded auto licence plates and liquor licences, Premier George Henry asserted that the policy of the government was not to interfere with the municipalities in the administration of relief. The government tried to give leadership, not to dictate, and as for the "Report of the Campbell Commission," that was "merely a suggestion." But it proved to be a suggestion well remembered through the years of Depression yet to come when the notion of a standard policy and standard rates gained increasing acceptance, introducing some order and minimum justice into what had been a confusion of quarrels and complaints.

Another committee proposal – that unemployment relief be centred in the Ministry of Public Welfare – had to wait for the change of government in 1934. Prophetically noting that unemployment and relief would continue for a "long time to come," the report called for "a more permanent

provision through which the provincial government's relationship with municipalities in all welfare and relief matters might find expression." The place of permanent provision seemed obvious:

> *The Department of Public Welfare appears to be the natural source from which advice, assistance and cooperation may be provided for municipalities which are seeking assistance in matters affecting welfare organization, supervision, policies and welfare and relief administration generally.*

This advice was disregarded for the remaining two years of the Henry Government. Public Welfare and Unemployment Relief continued to be held quite apart, so much so that the Minister of Public Welfare was not one of the five ministers who controlled the Unemployment Relief Fund in the period from 1930 to 1934. The political focus was kept directly on the employment aspect and away from the relief aspect of the Unemployment Relief program. Never to lose sight of the supposedly temporary nature of the program, the legislature passed a renewed Act each year ratifying retroactively the agreements that had been made with the federal government for cost sharing. To the mounting dismay of politicians and public, the costs seemed to rise without limit. The total relief expenditure of $4 million in 1931 became nearly $16 million in 1932, over $28 million in 1933, above $33 million in 1934 and $36,565,000 in 1935. The province's share of relief costs was devouring fully half the Ontario Government budget; the total relief bill in Ontario for the three levels of government exceeded that budget.

When business fails in Canada, politics carries the blame, so that the governments had little hope of continuance in the face of such discontent. In June, 1934, the Liberals under Hepburn came to power in Ontario. A year later, the Liberals under Mackenzie King would return to power in the Federal House.

Mitchell Hepburn's choice for Minister of Public Welfare and Municipal Affairs was David Croll, and we have already noted that he was made Minister of Labour as well. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee presiding over the Unemployment Relief Fund in the prior government had been Minister of Labour, while the administrative staff reported to the Bureau of Municipal Affairs. All the while, it was evident that relief was taking on more and more the aspect of a simple dole out of assistance, the "something for nothing" of a welfare program. The new Minister, soon grasping the logic of the situation, transferred unemployment relief to the Department of Public Welfare as a branch operation in the summer of 1934. J.A. Ellis continued as executive head of the Unemployment Relief Branch for a few months until his death at the age of seventy on December 27, 1934. David B. Harkness, former secretary to the Campbell Committee, then took over the post.

The branch was not fully integrated into the Department structure for some years. The political importance and the vast annual expenditure of over $30 million put the unit in a class of its own. It was a coordinating point between Labour, Welfare and Municipal Affairs. The title of Director of Unemployment Relief was kept by the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Welfare for a decade onward usually held one or both of the other portfolios.

The transfer of 1934 was accompanied by a ruthless handling of staff. Nearly all the welfare officers in the field were dismissed – political patronage was then a potent influence – but the few retained were soon joined by a large number of recruits. In a year of drastic civil service reduction the Relief Branch increased its total complement. Four administrative divisions were laid out to cover the province, and in the south there were twelve inspection areas. The branch launched a new registration of all cases, a study of comparative costs, promotion of a cash relief for work plan and a revision of medical service for recipients. The branch also had provincial staff administering relief in the defaulted and supervised municipalities and in the municipally unorganized areas of northern Ontario.

Cash relief and medical services were truly enlightened innovations. The handing out of money in place of the cautiously issued script or vouchers was a notion slightly shocking even to the *avant-garde* of the private charities and the social work profession. "Shall we have cash relief?" asked the Board of Governors of the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare in a statement of January, 1934. The answer was a modified "No;" supervision of recipients was usually a necessity. Furthermore, the board added in a private letter to Prime Minister Bennett, cash issuances would entice low-wage workers to quit and go on welfare. But before the year-end cash relief, the idea of Croll

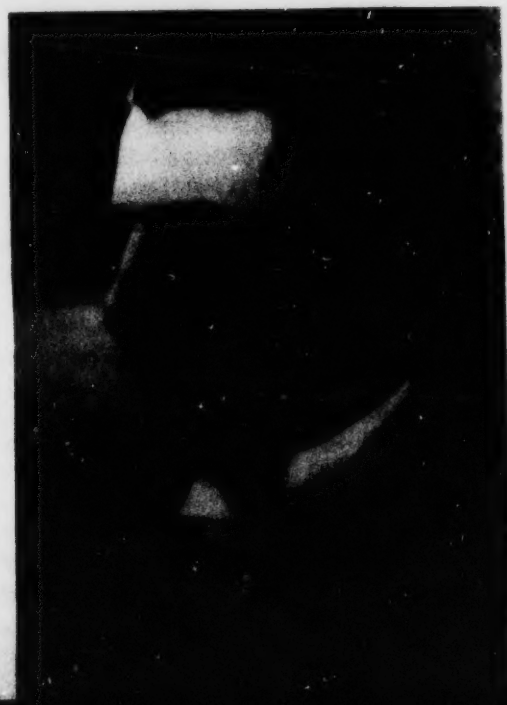
and his staff, was a reality. This was confirmed the next summer in a circular to all municipalities: "Government has, however, adopted a definite attitude of approval towards the issuing of cash relief benefits – a cash relief system with a full work program may be instituted."[2] The connection between cash relief and work eventually diminished and money issuances became the norm, though even into the 1960s some rural townships and villages retained the voucher system.

The medical-service arrangement was an unmitigated blessing to recipients. Senior staff in the Department, particularly James Band, one of the staff retained from 1933, conceived the idea of a type of non-profit insurance scheme to supply physicians' services and medicine to the relief caseload. The Ontario Medical Association, in a commendable display of social conscience, willingly took part. The province paid an agreed sum or "premium" to the OMA for each person on the relief rolls month by month. The recipient was given a card to take to his doctor of choice and to pharmacies for medicines prescribed. The doctor's bill was paid by the association, often not in full but as much as could be spared from the general fund. The method worked well for years with nearly total absence of delay or disagreement, and it was eventually extended to cover Mothers' Allowances and Old Age Pension recipients, continuing to function satisfactorily until the advent of universal health insurance.

Another novelty of Croll's time was permanent legislation. Apparently acknowledging that the Depression was no mere "emergency" but might be an endless disaster, Croll drafted the Unemployment Relief Act of 1935. The three preceding Acts had been limited to the current year. But this one was intended to last, and the unlimited powers proclaimed by the government under it sound like the voice of determination or despair. The opening section is a curiosity worth quoting:

> *The Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall be deemed to have full power and authority respecting unemployment relief measures of every kind and nature and to do, perform and require the doing and performance of any Act, matter, deed or thing as may from time to time appear necessary to cope with unemployment relief conditions.*

Legally, anything could be done; practically, not much. The problem in 1935 was to keep from slipping into ruin rather than to make progress. The economic, social and human issues besetting the Unemployment Relief program were appalling. Municipal finance, for instance, was near collapse. Thirty-four municipalities, including the urban townships in the Toronto area, and cities, such as Windsor and Sudbury, were defaulting on the debentures they had issued to meet welfare costs. The enormous sum of $105 million was outstanding, and it was beyond municipal ability to pay the inter-



As Attorney General, Arthur Roebuck (left) joined with David Cross and Mitchell Hepburn as one of the triumvirate of top influence in the Liberal Government in 1934. By 1937, both Roebuck and Croll had resigned. ***(Ontario Archives)***

One of the more organized unemployment protests was this march (right) in Ottawa in 1936. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

est. Municipalities were calling for provincial assistance, yet in the Minister's words they were "irresponsible" in refusing to limit issuances to the provincial relief rates. New Toronto was an example of local irresponsibility; though "hopelessly in default," it had relief 39 per cent above the recommended scale of the Campbell Report.

On the other side of the dilemma were the angry demonstrations outside relief offices against the meagre dole and the "hunger marches" through Ontario cities. In the spring of 1935, 2,000 marchers came to Queen's Park to demand a 50 per cent increase in food vouchers. Hepburn, Croll and Roebuck promised to tour the reliefees' homes to see if malnutrition existed as alleged. They spent their Easter holidays visiting and, as a result, authorized increases in food.

The plight of unemployed war veterans especially troubled the social conscience. A law had been passed in the previous Session forbidding the pawning and resale of military medals and ribbons, at one time granted for gallantry and service, now good only for a pittance to stave off urgent want. The Soldiers' Aid Commission called attention not only to the distress of many veterans, but also to their steadfast loyalty to social order:

> *It is generally recognized that throughout all the disturbances incident to the economic situation, the ex-servicemen as a whole have remained absolutely sympathetic to the forces of law and order and this fact is being emphasized to employers at every opportunity. There are records of recent occasions when the weight of an organized body of veterans behind the local police force has had a material effect in helping to quell what might have developed into a more or less serious situation. Kirkland Lake and Sudbury are instances where the local body of veterans have rendered definite and welcome services.*

Even so, that winter an enterprise called the Veterans' Salvage Corps had ex-servicemen tramping the streets gathering discarded clothing and furniture to refurbish and sell, working, said Croll, under "slavery conditions." When the Department sent out an investigator, the corps threatened to sue for libel and were especially bitter about being examined by "a person with a foreign name, one Bozanki." Minister Croll (Jewish, born in Moscow) hastened to explain that the man was a veteran too, English, no foreigner, with an ancient Norman surname, spelled "Bosanquet." "Society is sick," said the Minister, "provincially we can find no cure, only palliatives."

In the midst of these unpleasantries, the federal government announced in August, 1935, that they would no longer pay 33 per cent of relief costs; rather there would be flat grants which, for

Ontario, would be $600,000 monthly, substantially less than before. This was a hard blow. Within a month, the federal share had sunk to 21 per cent, the provincial had risen to 57 per cent, and total relief costs had jumped again. The bill for 1933 had seemed "insurmountable," yet Ontario was paying twice that amount in 1935.

A circular was sent out by the Department to the municipalities in this same month of August, 1935. It asserted that Ontario in turn would pay lump-sum grants, not subsidies, to municipalities; that is, unless after the pending federal election that summer the new government in Ottawa would confer with the provinces about adequate federal assistance. As it turned out, a conference was held in December, and the newly elected federal government increased the payments to near equality with the former level of participation. But the subsidization was to be on a grant-in-aid basis, rather than a percentage of actual costs, not a good deal for Ontario. As the total relief bill for all governments declined slightly, the federal grants decreased in greater proportion from over $1 million per month in the winter of 1936 to $465,000 in the winter of 1939.

The hard-pressed Department would have been happy to know that by 1936 the economic depression had finally "bottomed out," though at a depth unimaginable in 1930. Each year was looked for as the turning point towards a hopeful, normal society, but from 1929 onward the implacable statistics had accumulated in the government's ledgers. In the worst year the Department suppressed the case-load figures. A decade later, it was revealed that, "upwards of 500,000 persons obtained relief in April, 1933, the month showing the largest number of recipients." That was 15 per cent of Ontario's population. The next year at the same time there were 450,482 enrolled, and a year later (March, 1935) 418,142 persons. The numbers of recipients each spring did not fall below 400,000 until 1937. From that point on, there was not so much a decline as a drop to a lower plateau and a three-year stasis until the sharp reduction in case-load in the second year of war. The number was 313,359 in March, 1939, and in March, 1942, just 32,704, mostly unemployables.

The disappearance of demand for unemployment relief with the appearance of a job market for all willing and able workers proved instructive to critics of the program. Through the ten years of Depression, particularly at government negotiation conferences, there was much talk of inflated costs due to welfare abuse, administrative laxity, client sloth and fraud, and kindred allegations.

The Unemployment Relief Act of 1935 was remarkably durable for legislation of its type. Saving two amendments up to 1941, the Act lasted untouched for fifteen years. It was a landmark because for the first time the doubtful claim of municipal responsibility for basic welfare was grounded in law. Section 5 decreed, "Every municipality shall provide relief for unemployed persons and their dependents." Administrative jurisdiction was vested in the Minister of Public Welfare, and this relief or general welfare continues to be, in partnership with the municipalities, a central responsibility of the Department.

To carry the pre-war story of the program to its logical termination, it should be noted that after negotiations in late 1938 between the then Minister of Public Welfare, Eric Cross, and his federal counterpart, Norman Rogers, a new arrangement took effect on April 1, 1939. The formula for sharing was to be 40 per cent federal, 40 per cent provincial, and 20 per cent municipal. The federal repayment doubled as expected, but shortly after negotiations the federal authority unilaterally reduced it by $300,000 monthly. Hepburn was enraged; this to him was but another betrayal justifying the acrimonious feud he carried on with Mackenzie King. Hepburn refused to ratify the agreement, whereupon the King Government cut off all payments for three months, until, as Hepburn alleged,

This Toronto streetscape of the 1930s is a mute testimony to the effects of unemployment. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

Ontario was "clubbed into signing." The rights and wrongs of this episode are obscure and intricate; Eric Cross, when no longer in the cabinet and bitterly at odds with Hepburn, denied in the legislature the Premier's contention that the federal negotiators had time after time broken their word in welfare matters. In fact, the federal share of costs for the next two years averaged 5 per cent below the expected 40 per cent level. In March, 1941, with a war economy rapidly reducing unemployment and unemployment relief, the federal government withdrew all support for the program, and this long-standing quarrel between Toronto and Ottawa at last came to an end.

The Ontario premier, in a surprising burst of generosity, informed municipalities that the province alone would now subsidize 75 per cent of costs, though one year later this was cut back to a 50/50 arrangement. Meanwhile, relief to people who could work was phased out, and provincial staff were assigned to help the last, more or less employable types off the fast-diminishing rolls and into jobs. Despite its title, for the next fifteen years the Unemployment Relief Act offered maintenance only to those who were not employable and no relief to those simply out of work. During that time, however, a booming labour market and the new unemployment insurance plan precluded any general need or want.

Chapter 3

CHILD WELFARE

The early history of child welfare in Ontario up to 1930 has received more attention from historians than any other aspect of social services. Here it is necessary only to sketch the development that produced a fully-matured Children's Aid Society system that came under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Welfare soon after its inception in 1931.

Neglected, abandoned or otherwise unattached children were, of course, to be found in Ontario from the years of early settlement, and community actions on their behalf generally reflected humane and kindly attitudes limited, however, by the meagre resources and rigorous demands of pioneer life. From the Orphans Act of 1779 to the Apprentices and Minors Act of 1851 apprenticeship was the main legal provision for dealing with such children. But this would be practicable only in the case of boys and girls old enough to be trained to work. Contemporary descriptions of life in Upper Canada and Canada West suggest that most orphaned or deserted youngsters were simply taken into one of the neighbourhood homes without formality, through kindly motives but also with the prospect that their work on the farm would eventually more than repay the cost of nurture. Children were an asset, not a liability, in a rural society that was perpetually shorthanded.

By the 1850s, religious organizations, lodges and other fraternal groups were well established and participating in good works. Institutions for children began to appear under their auspices, taking into residential care first the least disposable children, the physically and mentally handicapped, then the orphans of the cities and finally potentially or actually delinquent adolescents.

The Provincial Government gave variable financial help to these institutions from an early date, but it was the Charity Aid Act of 1874 that regularized this public assistance. The per-diem grant covered on the average 13 per cent of the cost in twenty-seven orphanages and group homes housing some 896 residents at that time.

The Industrial Schools Act was promulgated in the same year. Police magistrates were given the authority to commit to a school any child under the age of fourteen found begging, wandering without domicile, or if destitute, neglected or found uncontrollable by parents. The industrial schools were to be built on the initiative of municipal governments, but none appeared until after 1884 when an amendment allowed the municipalities to delegate the task to private organizations. By 1893, there were two centres, both in Toronto, the Victoria Industrial School for Boys and Alexandra Girls School. The Province inspected the schools and made annual grants; the municipalities were responsible for maintenance costs, but the bulk of the income came from private sources. These schools did not gain much influence in the child-care field; there were only four of them by 1930 when they came under the Department of Public Welfare, but eventually the province's child corrections service grew from this early base.

Official perceptions of the appropriate method of disposing of problem children had moved from apprenticeship, to institutional care, and now progressed towards the idea of foster-home placement. The sense of public responsibility had also enlarged beyond the obligation to provide a livelihood for the parentless youngsters to include the duty of protecting children from the moral and physical damage they might suffer even when in the hands of their mothers and fathers. The Children's Protection Act of 1888 allowed charitable organizations to place children in foster homes as an alternative to institutions and permitted some intervention between child and unsatisfactory parents. But this latter was an idea still far from popular acceptance. It seemed to most citizens a dangerous invasion of personal rights when the state presumed to regulate the way in which parents

treated their own offspring and even delegated to strangers the power to abduct the child from the family home. Cruelty to children was deplorable, but the rights of parents and citizen were precious.

From our vantage point today, we have some reason for ironic wonder in recalling that it proved to be easier to gain popular consent for state intervention in cases of cruelty to animals, and it was through that opening that the Humane Society movement was able to secure legislation to prevent cruelty to children.

In 1887, the first Ontario Humane Society was organized in Toronto in great part through the efforts of a twenty-three-year-old newspaper reporter, J.J. Kelso. He helped to draft the Children's Protection Act of 1888 and participated in the political lobbying that saw it pass the legislature. The

Scenes such as this one pointed to the real need for children's institutions, children's aid societies and foster homes. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

statute did not prove particularly effective, but the movement of influential opinion was substantially stengthened by an 1890 Royal Commission on the Prison and Reformatory System. Their report drew attention to the gangs of "street arabs" in Toronto, to the shame and nuisance of unwashed, unschooled, unattended children who were too common a sight everywhere.

In 1891, the social reformers who had formed the Humane Society, again led chiefly by the energetic Kelso, organized in Toronto the first children's aid society. Pressure from this group and widespread public sympathy for its aims induced the Government to pass in the Spring Session of 1893, "An Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to and Better Protection for Children."

In this fundamental statute, a children's aid society was defined as any society approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council that had as its objects the protection of children from cruelty and the care and control of neglected children. Nothing was said about the organizational structure of the society, but it was given wide, almost unlimited, legal power to apprehend children in all public and private places. The children's aid society could become guardian over the child by a court procedure and, superseding the parents, place the child in a shelter, foster home or institution. The municipality

of residence was mandatorily required to pay "a reasonable sum" for the child's care, not less than $1 weekly. Each city or town over 10,000 in population was required to establish and maintain a temporary shelter or receiving home for children under the control of the society.

The legislation provided for a provincial Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children, and Kelso was appointed to that position July 1, 1893. Thus began a brilliant career of forty years, through which Kelso is recognized as the father of the Children's Aid system in Ontario. Kelso's fame is unquestioned, but protagonists of the legend that in Ontario private social services grew chiefly by their own efforts and opened all the new paths that governments belatedly followed fail to acknowledge how much the "private, autonomous" children's aid societies were created and sustained by this indefatigable provincial official. Some twenty years after Kelso began his work, when there were seventy-five societies operating, British Poor Law Commissioners examined the system and remarked that the total organization even at that date "has too much the character of a 'one man' affair." Local societies were in reality uncertain, tentative committees. "One or two drop out of existence every year though fresh ones are constantly being formed and one of the greatest difficulties which the Superintendent's reports disclose is the necessity of constant stimulus to local effort."[1]

In 1893, Kelso set to work with a will to promote societies in all parts of the province. The Toronto Society was the first to be approved under the Act in October, 1893. Ottawa, Peterborough, London, Guelph all followed in six months. Two years later, there were said to be no fewer than twenty-nine societies, and thirty were in operation by the end of the century. The numbers reported fluctuated inconsistently, there were fifty-eight in 1906 but only forty-seven in 1914. In 1924, the societies numbered fifty-five, and after an upsurge to sixty in 1926 they settled back to fifty-five, the stable number of societies for many years after.

In the thirty-year period up to 1920, the typical children's aid society was a small operation administered by a committee of locally-prominent people, employing two or three staff. In the first decade up to 1900, all the societies together took into care an average of 300 children annually, which by rough averaging means less than one new case per month for each unit. Through the first three decades of the 20th century, the children taken into wardship annually approached 1,000, that is, two new cases per month for the fifty-odd societies, on average, though in reality the distribution would be much higher in populous areas.

Kelso's method of reporting does not reveal how many children were actually in wardship in any year or any time in the year. We read of the number of new cases but not of the number of existing cases to which these were added. Instead, Kelso gives the accumulated totals over a period of years; from 1893 to 1914, a total of 9,503 children; from 1893 to 1926 the total was 25,748. These are useless statistics because there is no way of estimating how many wards left the rolls as time went on and how many remained at any one date. One suspects that Kelso did not know the annual numbers, because when an older boy or girl was placed in unpaid and permanent foster care the subsequent fate of the child was not infrequently lost to view. Home visits were made by local CAS people and by Kelso and staff to an average of 6,000 visits yearly in the decade before 1920, but we are not informed what proportion this represented of the total foster-home population. In 1918, Kelso calculated that this population amounted to something between 10,000 and 12,000 children, probably an over-estimate, since, when accurate counts began to be taken after 1930, the figures for the first five years varied from 6,751 at year's end to 7,260 in December, 1935. Thereafter, the number at year end dates rose above 10,000 and in the last war-time year, 1945, stood at 14,694.

During the first twenty or thirty years, children's aid work was a relatively uncomplicated business of apprehending neglected or abused children referred by police, private charities, churches and other organizations and individuals. After a short stay in a receiving home, the child was brought before a judge, and if circumstances of neglect or abuse were substantiated, the court usually assigned the child to the society's care for an indeterminate period. The child was then placed more or less permanently with foster parents, often remaining until maturity. The foster home was typically a farm where children were useful in domestic and agricultural work. There would be little problem finding such homes; the farmers' demand for children exceeded the supply as evidenced by the fact that from the 1880s until the Great War agencies from Great Britain were

settling every year about 2,500 immigrant children in Ontario homes, nearly ten times the number placed by the children's aid societies.

Although we might doubt the suitability of transferring children to such foster homes, where maternal and monetary values might be oddly mixed, Kelso approved this as good child welfare practise from first to last. At the end of his career he said, "In fact the chief cure we have for the average neglected child is to transfer him from an urban to a rural district...a child of a poor family in a city is so cramped and hindered and restricted in his development that artificial means have to be supplied for legitimate play activities."

But he was aware of the dangers of exploitation, and in one of his first letters of instruction to societies he warned, "Children placed out in foster homes must in all cases be treated as equals, dining at the family table, attending day and Sabbath schools and afforded opportunities of enjoyment and recreation in common with other children...They may be employed on household errands and service to a reasonable extent...Care must however be taken by the committee to see that they are not used or treated as servants – a practice altogether too common among those who apply for the care of dependent children." Yet the admonition referred mainly to the grade school ages. Kelso asserted that girls at twelve and boys at fourteen should become self-supporting. Because wardship continued to eighteen years of age, and in special cases to twenty-one, this often meant years of labour on the farm at subsistence wages with a status that might vary anywhere from a happy family member to the hard lot of a bound servant.

In the first years of CAS work, there was no thought of payment to foster parents. Placement in free homes was the normal practice, and Kelso took pride in the amounts of money saved on behalf of municipalities that otherwise would have had to pay maintenance. The foster homes were classified as free, or work homes or pay homes. In the work homes wards were deemed to be paying their own way by their labour. Through time, the pay homes, where foster parents received reimbursement for care, became increasingly the main resource. This was probably the result of a wider use of farm machinery, rendering hand labour less necessary; the stringency of school-attendance laws that severely reduced the ward's work time; and the lower rural population, as people moved to the cities where non-paying guests had a negative economic value.

Up to 1920 and beyond, the income and expenditures of the average children's aid society were less than commensurate even with its relatively low level of activities. There were few salaried staff and a great deal of the home finding and visiting was done by volunteers. As late as the 1920s, the annual budget of the typical society was not far beyond $5,000. The usual source was about half from the municipalities and the rest from charitable donations. For some time the province had paid all or most of the salary and travel expenses of the local superintendent; this was the only provincial financial aid, and in 1926 the total was $52,000 among fifty-five societies.

The municipalities often preferred to commute their legal responsibility to maintain wards into an annual grant that saved bookkeeping on both sides, though the society probably got the worst of the bargain. For some years after the Child Protection Act of 1893, the cities and towns, excepting the City of Toronto, ignored the obligation that children's shelters be set up and supported for the use of the local society. By 1912, however, the eighteen shelters then operating apparently fulfilled the practical and legal requirements.

The services to children improved steadily, if unspectacularly, year by year. Removal of the child from parental care was no longer the sole response of societies to the discovery of neglect; family counselling and protective supervision in the home became a feature of the work of societies, although it was often attempted by untrained if well-meaning volunteers. At least two institutions that had acquired unsavoury reputations as prisons for youth, the Penetanguishene Reformatory for Boys and the Mercer Industrial Refuge for Girls, were closed between 1900 and 1905 and their inmates delivered to more appropriate types of care under CAS supervision. Juvenile Courts were finally established after the Juvenile Deliquents Act of 1908. The deficiencies and abuses that had attended the massive resettlement of 28,945 British foundlings on Ontario farms prior to 1897 were in great part ameliorated by the Act to Regulate Juvenile Immigration passed in that year. The Toronto Play-

grounds Association was formed in 1908; settlement homes began to appear in urban slums as centres of improved community life and social service, and agitation for mothers' pensions from government was demanding political attention by 1914.

The Office of the Provincial Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children, J.J. Kelso, and his general staff had a large hand in all these developments and were usually among the prime moving spirits of the public campaigns and the inter-governmental improvements.

After the all-absorbing interval of the Great War, social-reform movements resumed with heightened zeal. The passage of the Mothers' Allowances Act in 1920 was of obvious benefit to child welfare services because family destitution and neglect and ill usage of children are often associated misfortunes. The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1914 had had a similar beneficial effect. But the legislation of immediate importance to the societies and the provincial child welfare inspectorate was the 1920 Act for the Protection of Children of Unmarried Parents and the Adoption Act of 1921.

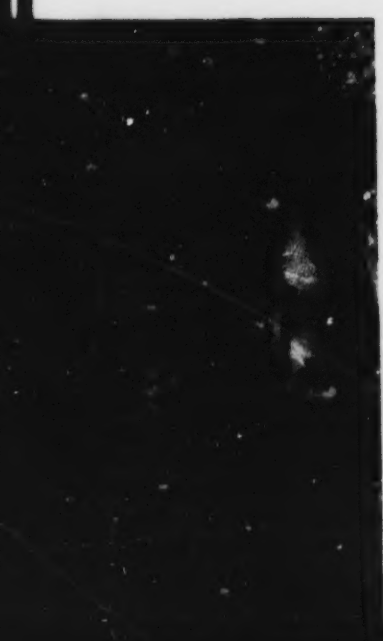
Legal and administrative processes were now established to assist unmarried mothers to prove who were the fathers of their children and to obtain financial support from them. A legally-drawn agreement for support between the parents and, if necessary, an affiliation order declaring paternity were the chief devices.

Courts were prepared to punish defaulters on agreements, and the Office of the Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children was given the onerous task of collecting and dispensing the support funds. This involved the pursuit of fathers who failed to keep up payments along with an extensive accounting system.

The Adoption Act was a welcome simplification of former cumbersome procedures. Adoptions rose from a dozen or so annually to a level of 600 per year in the 1920s and to 900 even in the Depression decade. Adoption gave final security to the many children in "permanent foster home placements" and relieved the societies of financial and supervisory responsibility for children which had sometimes continued with them from infancy to majority. The process instituted in 1921 remains essentially the same today. The local society receives applications and then investigates and assesses the compatibility of prospective parents and child. The provincial authority adds its approval, and a local court makes the relationship legally binding.

The prompt, almost unexpected appearance of this new set of laws, their scope and generosity, inspired J.J. Kelso to state in 1925, "There is little left to strive for in the way of new child welfare legislation." For the next five years, the child welfare services pursued a steady and relatively uneventful course until the administrative structure of the Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children was brought under the jurisdiction in early 1931 of the new Department of Public Welfare.

At the time David Croll became Minister of Public Welfare in 1934, Kelso retired; neither one could have forseen the wave of controversy about the break around the Department.



Even in the Toronto of the mid-1930s, slum conditions (far left) had not improved beyond a 19th century level. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

Street arabs were a fact of life in the Ontario of the 1930s; little wonder that attempts at child welfare in the province were met with such complete approval. ***(Ontario Archives)***

Croll and the quintuplets

An account of the short but eventful three years while David Croll was Minister of Public Welfare would be incomplete without mention of the Dionne quintuplets. The five babies were born in Nipissing District near Callander on May 28, 1934. The world-wide excitement around their birth and the intensive popular interest that continued through their childhood was well founded. The children were as close as nature comes to a miracle. They were unique in human history in several respects. They were developed from a single ovum and therefore identical in appearance and physique. Of the rare quintuplet births recorded through the centuries, only two had been monozygotic. More astounding, these babies survived; no other set of five had lived for more than a few days. The bare anthropological facts were transformed by more romantic elements: the farm in "the north woods," the French-Canadian parents on the edge of poverty bewildered by the event, and their rags to riches prospects. Above all was the near saintly figure of the country doctor, Roy Allan Dafoe, amazingly good, unexpectedly skilful, who kept the babies alive by marvels of improvisation. After the medical struggle to preserve the Dionne infants that thrilled the world, they grew rapidly into adorable, photogenic babies. Within a year they were the primary tourist attraction in Canada, and its best known inhabitants.

When the Hepburn Government took office after the June 19 election, it was almost immediately involved in the Dionne quintuplet excitement and controversy. The father, Oliva Dionne, understandably confused by the drama and horrified by the initial expenses that he had no hope of paying, allowed American promoters to talk him into signing a contract to exhibit the babies, when it was safe to do so, sometime that summer at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago. Despite the saving clause, the scarcely living babies would have probably perished. Within twenty-four hours, Oliva and the mother, Elzire Dionne, repudiated the contract but not soon enough to avoid a storm of indignation from all quarters of the globe coupled with the demand that the quintuplets be protected from such money-minded parents.

The triumvirate of Hepburn, Croll and Roebuck acted quickly. They pressured the father to agree to a two-year guardianship arrangement for the five children, during which time all their expenses would be paid by the Province directly or through whatever income might be raised by the guardians. Attorney General Roebuck announced on July 27, 1934, that he had obtained a judicial order establishing a guardianship of four; namely, the doctor, Allan Dafoe, the grandfather, Olivier Dionne, Ken Morrison, a family friend and Reeve of the Township, and W.A. Alderson of the Red Cross. This last agency, along with American and Canadian newspapers, had supplied most of the special equipment and material required.

The Department of Public Welfare, under Croll, would be responsible for the guardianship's administrative and financial arrangements. Croll stated that construction would start immediately

on a group of buildings to house the quintuplets and the medical staff, so that the babies could live outside the crowded family home where the utilities (as in most northern Ontario rural houses of that time) were on 19th century level. The building complex was put up with speed, and by September the children, nurses and domestic staff were installed.

A basic decision had been implemented, to raise the children apart from their family. The parents were discontented from the beginning, and a long feud began, drawn out over ten years, between the Dionnes on one side and Dr. Dafoe and the Ontario Government on the other. The causes and depth of bad feeling on both sides are impossible to appreciate forty years later, but at the time the resentment was passionate.

The quintuplets lived in a glare of publicity. Within the year, the public was allowed to view them daily; they were the most effective tourist attraction Ontario had ever had. Their presence commercially revitalized the surrounding communities and the City of North Bay. The guardians negotiated numerous contracts with publishers, advertisers, and movie-makers to use the name and personalities of the quintuplets for commercial purposes.The proceeds went into a fund for the children, and many commentators rejoiced in the quintuplets' growing riches. It was less well known that their total establishment costs – guardians, buildings and staff – were also paid for out of the fund. The quintuplets were made to be self-supporting rather than subsidized by government.

Profit-making from quintuplet publicity was common to all involved parties, but it excited a strange animosity when tried by the parents. Dr. Dafoe had visited New York as a celebrity with paid guest appearances in a fanfare of universal delight and approval, yet when the parents contracted to appear on American stages, of course without the quintuplets, in February, 1935, there was a critical outcry. The public was reminded of the notorious contract to exhibit the newborn babies. Premier Hepburn was enraged. "Nauseating, disgusting, revolting" were his adjectives for these appearances. "It is cheap American publicity.... It is a reflection on the Canadian people."

In this gale of indignation David Croll immediately set to work to draft legislation intended to secure the girls from parental control until they were independent adults. The result was the Act Respecting Guardianship of the Dionne Quintuplets of 1935.

The quintuplets were made "special wards of His Majesty, the King, represented by the Minister of Public Welfare." The Cabinet was empowered to appoint a Board of Guardians, but it was the Minister of Public Welfare who would embody the Crown authority and responsibility for these wards, including the power to suspend any guardian and to supervise any financial arrangements. It was conceded that the father would be one of the Guardians. As it turned out, Dr. Dafoe and Judge J.A. Valin were two others; David Croll was, in effect, chairman of the board.

The Bill was debated in March of 1935, and the only Opposition criticism was the pre-eminence given to the Minister of Welfare. The suggestion was that the Official Guardian instead be given the responsibility.

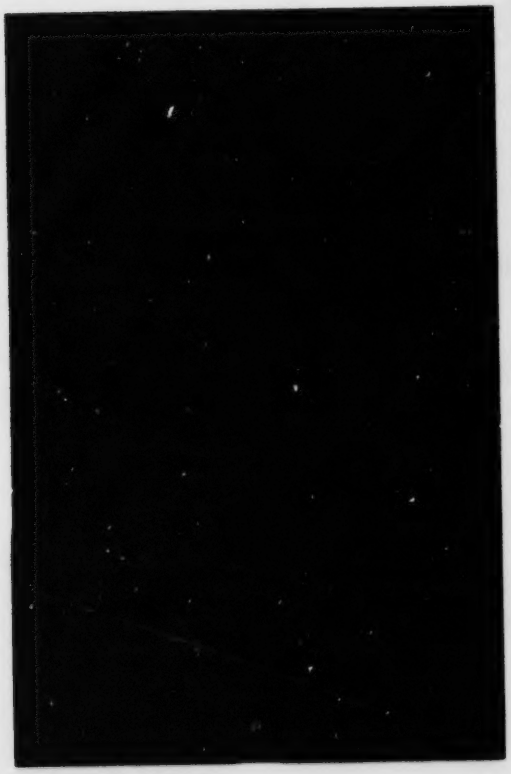
For the next two years, the Minister of Public Welfare was an active member of the Board of Guardians, often visiting the quintuplets and travelling to the United States to negotiate motion picture contracts for them. The board was a centre of friction. The management of the quintuplets' commercial affairs had become big business. Citing this as a reason, and saying that he had to choose between his work on the board and his duties as a Minister of three departments, Croll resigned as a Guardian on February 5, 1937. As he recommended, the Provincial Guardian took over the responsibilities and the Department of Public Welfare had no further connection with the Dionne quintuplets.

The birth of the Dionne quintuplets was seen as nothing short of a biological miracle. After much uproar, they became "special wards of His Majesty, the King, represented by the Minister of Public Welfare," David Croll (shown here on the far left). The other guardians included Dr. R.A. Dafoe (second from left), Judge J.A. Valin (third from left), and Oliva Dionne (fourth from left). Mitchell Hepburn is on the far right. ***(Ontario Archives)***

The quintuplets lived in a glare of publicity. Within a year of their birth, the public was allowed to view them daily; they became North Bay's largest industry and Ontario's greatest tourist attraction. ***(Ontario Archives)***

Mitchell Hepburn (below) campaigning for re-election in 1937. *(Ontario Archives)*

On October 12, 1937, with the general election safely out of the way, Premier Hepburn appointed Eric William Blake Cross (below) as Minister of Public Welfare and Municipal Affairs. *(Ontario Archives)*



Chapter 4

THE HEPBURN ERA CONTINUES

David Croll's forced resignation on April 15, 1937, left vacant the portfolios of Welfare, Labour and Municipal Affairs. In view of the general elections planned for October, in the interim Premier Hepburn took over these ministries himself. George Tattle, a thirty-year-old civil servant who had won the confidence of the Premier was installed in Croll's office on April 17 as General Secretary for the three departments. On the same day, Edward A. Horton, who had been recently hired by Municipal Affairs as a consultant, was appointed Deputy Minister of that department. Several months later, in the summer of 1937, Milton Sorsoleil, sixty-eight years old and in failing health, retired as Deputy Minister of Public Welfare, and Horton also assumed that post. Horton's attentions were chiefly focussed on the troubles of the municipalities and the Unemployment Relief program which was the basis of financial problems. The administration of public welfare from 1937 forward was mainly left to the General Secretary, George Tattle, who also served as Vice Chairman of the Mothers' Allowances Commission. The chairman of that commission and of the Old Age Pension Commission was Dr. Albert Falconer, a former Minister of Health, who had lost his seat in the 1937 election.

During the six months that Mitchell Hepburn was Minister of Public Welfare, there were one or two notable program changes. An agreement was concluded with the federal government as of September 1 to introduce Blind Persons' Allowances. These were added by way of an amendment to the Old Age Pension Act to make blind persons eligible on a needs-test basis at forty years of age for an income equivalent to that of old age pensioners. Within a year, a thousand recipients were on the payroll, but the program through the years remained a modest one.

A second notable change in 1937 was the transfer of the industrial and training schools for children and youth to the Department of the Provincial Secretary. At its formation in 1930, public welfare had taken over jurisdiction of five industrial schools and two training schools. The term "industrial school" was applied to the residences operated by private organizations for delinquent boys and girls committed to them by the Juvenile Courts. The "training school" was an idea of the late 1920s to provide residential training for troublesome or troubled children and teenagers assigned from a variety of sources, chiefly by parents and children's aid societies.

W.G. Martin, the first W[illegible]fare Minister, had made these schools his primary focus of interest and was able to encourage some expansion and improvement of the buildings. David Croll's administration continued the thrust towards reform by closing two of the larger and older industrial schools and generally reducing the resident population in favour of other types of service, chiefly foster homes. There had been 758 residents in 1931, but by 1935 this number was reduced to 324 and two years later to 250.

As distinct from these industrial institutions, the two training schools, one for boys at Bowmanville and one for girls at Galt, looked after 300 older children. The training schools had been considered showplaces by the Ferguson Government. But the method of institutional care for children was less in favour in the 1930s, and the economizing Liberal Government was even less enthusiastic about the idea of high-cost operations. There was a streamlining reduction of both sets of schools before the program was passed over to the Provincial Secretary in 1937. It was to return to the Department, greatly changed, as Children's Corrections, forty years later.

Prior to the October election of 1937, the newspapers correctly speculated that Hepburn had already chosen several new faces for the projected cabinet. Among these was Eric William Blake Cross, at that time Chairman of the Municipal Board. This thirty-three-year-old lawyer from Madoc, Ontario, had no political experience, but it was arranged that the incumbent in the safe constituency

of Haldimand North would step aside to make way for the Premier's favourite, and Cross won the seat handily on October 7th. On October 12, 1937, he was sworn in as Minister of Public Welfare and Municipal Affairs.

Because Cross' experience had been in relations with municipal government, as Minister he undertook to carry through some improvements in that field. He was notably successful in restoring the financial credit of defaulted municipalities. In 1934, their debenture debt had been $104 million; when Cross left the Municipal Board in 1937, the debt had been reduced by one-half and by 1940 nearly all the balance had been paid.

The methods of the new Minister required unpopular economies. Unemployment Relief was still an exceedingly expensive program, and Cross moved to reduce the rates, rates which many critics considered as already too low. His decision was to fix relief at 25 per cent above the scale of the Campbell Report of 1932 which still served as the base. This meant a 15 per cent reduction in Toronto, and the city council protested vociferously.

In 1936, the Soldiers' Aid Commission had purchased acreage near Barrie for a veterans' "Garden Land Settlement." For a few years there were hopes for success, but by the time the drainage problems of the swampy area were solved the war had absorbed all interest and all prospects of settlers. In 1939, the Unemployment Relief Branch had two projects in hand. Under the Farm Rehabilitation plan, the Department and the municipality agreed to rent farms and garden plots for the use of indigent families. Under a "Vacant Land Cultivation" provision, the welfare authorities intended that, so far as was practicable, every recipient family would grow its own vegetables. "Each family on the active files of the local relief department is required to take a garden plot or cultivate a backyard garden or produce a medical certificate of inability to work." Though, once again, war prosperity made these plans redundant, the regulation authorizing supply of garden seeds was carefully preserved in legislation for twenty-five years.

Such minor projects, of course, gained Welfare Minister Cross little merit to offset the public protest at general reductions of relief. The municipalities were further upset when next year, in 1940, Cross as Minister of Municipal Affairs had to announce that the unconditional grants inaugurated a few years earlier would be cut in half. He was embroiled once again with a Toronto council that he characterized as ungrateful and in a pejorative phrase of the time as a "City Hall beef trust." Nor did he improve his municipal relationships by revising the Unemployment Relief Act to require that municipalities obtain his approval before they dismissed any relief officer, because, Cross explained, "relief officers may be pressured to do things contrary to regulations" in local elections.

Sometime following that Spring Session of the Legislature, Premier Hepburn and Cross had an irreconcileable quarrel, and Eric Cross resigned as Minister of Public Welfare on November 22, 1940. He continued to sit in the assembly for nearly three years – in "Bad Boy's Row," a bench reserved for a number of Hepburn opponents in his own party.

Hepburn could not have been pleased when a month later Cross entered the Interim Cabinet of Premier Harry Nixon as Attorney General. In less than six months, a general election turned out this government, and Cross was narrowly defeated in his constituency of Haldimand North. In 1944, he was appointed a County Court Judge and served in that capacity for twenty-one years. Eric Cross died February 25, 1965, at age sixty-one, while struggling from his snowbound car towards his rural home on the stormiest day of that winter.

Chapter 5

MOTHERS' ALLOWANCES

As early as 1900, the Ontario Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children noted that a great deal of the neglect that led to wardship might be prevented if necessity did not force mothers to go out daily to work. "It would really be the greatest economy to support mothers in their own homes so they could devote all their time and attention to the training of their children."[1]

Such ideas continued to gain currency until a "mothers' pension" movement developed. In 1914, the Workmen's Compensation Act went some way towards establishing the precedent of a government-paid allowance to support a home when the breadwinner was injured or dead. But it was during and after the 1914-1918 war that proposals for mothers' pensions, like so many other novel social ideas, reached a level of popularity that attracted political interest.

The most effective pressure in the long run towards establishing a new social service is the accumulation of cases in need of that particular help, and the number of cases had certainly grown as an ever greater proportion of Ontario's population lived in towns and cities and worked, or hoped to work, in commerce and industry. Dependence on a pay packet and the swift destitution that could ensue when the family's wage-earning power was gone was an obvious fact of life in post-1918 society. Whatever heightened prosperity the average family might enjoy in the new industrial era, there were certain to be some households which would experience undeserved and chronic poverty.

Illustrating and intensifying this general hazard of 20th-century living in public consciousness was the effect and remembrance of the more than 61,000 lives lost in the influenza epidemic of 1918, depriving a multitude of wives and children of their normal family supports. War-time allowances to dependents of service personnel and the pensions paid to veterans' widows offered persuasive illustrations of what might be done for families who were equally casualties of modern life. A newspaper of the time expressed the sentiment explicitly:

> *The dependents of soldiers have been pensioned and the care of the children of those who fell in defence of democracy has become more or less a state duty. The part played by the worker who has fallen in the industrial struggle is also worthy of recognition....*[2]

After 1918, the pressure of public opinion in favour of such family assistance from the Ontario Government increased year by year, led by agitation on the part of women's organizations, labour unions and social service agencies. The concept of mothers' pensions was an idea whose time had come. The governments of the prairie provinces had recognized this inevitability, one after the other, Manitoba introducing Mothers' Allowances in 1916, Saskatchewan in 1917 and Alberta in 1919. "The country waits for Mothers' Pensions," editorialized the *London Free Press* in January, 1920, noting that the provincial government had lately received deputations on the subject from the Social Service Council, Trades and Labour Council, the Great War Veterans Association and the National Council of Women.

When the United Farmers of Ontario won a surprise victory in the general election of October, 1919, displacing the Conservative Hearst administration, a newspaper prophesized that, "The granting of mothers' pensions is one of the most important pieces of public business which the Provincial Government will contract during its first session."[3] Assertions were made at that time and since that the Hearst Government had plans ready for the new program before its defeat. Certainly there was a study underway conducted by a senior civil servant, Dr. W.A. Riddell. A conservative newspaper declared, after his report appeared in February, 1920, "The report was being carried into effect by a draft bill when the election intervened...."[4] Contrary evidence suggests that this pre-legislative report was far from complete in October. In any event, a favourable decision on the report when it did

appear and positive action in introducing the legislation promptly must be credited to the United Farmers' Government. The new Premier, Ernest Charles Drury, had strengthened his cabinet by the inclusion of two members from a Labour group of MPPs whose alliance he needed in the legislature. In November, 1919, one of these, Walter C. Rollo, was sworn in as first Minister in the newly-created Department of Labour.

The issue of pensions for mothers was assigned to the new organization of which Dr. Riddell, was made Deputy Minister. "The first work of the new department," states the initial Annual Report of Labour, "was the completion of the investigation into the need for mothers' allowances...." Public meetings and surveys were carried out by Riddell and his assistant, Margaret Kirkpatrick Strong. The inquiry was thorough; public and private meetings were held in all the main cities of Ontario and a sample of 500 widows was visited by researchers. Their work was summarized in a report, "Mothers' Allowances: An Investigation," issued in February, 1920.

The report stated that there were 15,524 widows in Ontario with 30,159 dependent children. Of these, 7,654 widows had two or more children to a total of 22,289. If widows without British citizenship were excluded, and about 400 cases added where the woman was not widowed but married to a man who was insane or totally disabled, the number of cases likely to be eligible for Mothers' Allowances was 2,400 at an annual cost of $896,533. The report attempted several methods of estimating case-load and costs. With hindsight we can see that both were underestimates, always likely in welfare programs, because the actual case-load was 3,500 within two years and costs exceeded $1.3 million.

The first Mothers' Allowances Act in Ontario was proclaimed in force on June 4, 1920, and the first allowances issued at the beginning of the new fiscal year, November 1, 1920. Though the focus was on assistance to widows with the result that the benefit was often referred to as "Widows' Allowances," from the start other mothers were eligible in two defined categories. The wife of a man who was an inmate of a hospital for the insane or of a man totally and permanently disabled could also qualify. The widow or wife had to be a British subject and have in care two or more of her children under fourteen. She must also have resided three years in Canada and two years in Ontario immediately preceding the date of application.

The allowance receivable to the mother was a monthly sum for living costs, at the time averaging $35.60. To raise part of these funds, the Province, for the first and last time in social services, imposed a compulsory levy on municipal government. The municipality where the recipient lived had to pay to the Province 50 per cent of the cost of Mothers' Allowances issued within its boundaries; the Province covered the other half; the Federal Government did not participate until forty years had passed.

The program was instituted with an elaborate administrative structure which set a pattern for the future. Few government social services were in direct contact with clients in those days; field work was largely the reserve of the charitable agencies and citizen boards. When this direct-allowance payment was introduced, the appropriate course seemed to be to screen it through citizen committees. An important consideration was that such semi-independent bodies would moderate political favouritism, then frequent if not universal, in staff appointments and benefit grants. The committees also mollified the oligarchs and professionals of the private organizations who had long been doubtful of the benefit of any type of "dole" unless the drive of the stalled recipient could be preserved or repaired by skilled social-work counselling.

The control of the program at the provincial level was put under a group of five appointees, the Mothers' Allowances Commission. This group would develop policy, supervise office and field staff, make final decisions on applications sent in from local citizen boards, pay out the monthly allowances and, in effect, administer the total program. The administrative model probably owed something to the Soldiers' Aid Commission. Management by the commission had become the accepted method and persisted for thirty years until displaced by the evolving pattern of program branch and director.

The first chairman of the Mothers' Allowance Commission was the Reverend Doctor Peter Bryce, forty-two years old, a prominent Methodist clergyman, an active community organizer of social services, an author of numerous journal articles (some advocating mothers' pensions), altogether an appropriate appointment. He had been acceptable to the Conservative as well as to the

Farmers' Government, though he was to leave the commission soon after the Conservatives returned to power under Ferguson in 1923.

Dr. Elizabeth Shortt of Ottawa, a physician and wife of Adam Shortt, Federal Deputy Minister of Labour, was vice-chairman; other members were Mrs. Minnie Singer of Toronto, who was vice-president of the Independent Labour Party; Mr. A.J. Reynolds of Hampton, representing the interest of the United Farmers of Ontario; and Major, later Lieutenant-Colonel, Thomas J. Murphy of London.

The commission reported to the Minister of Labour, but otherwise operated separately from that Department. There was, at the beginning, a staff of eighteen investigators in the field who took applications and visited recipients several times during the year. They also were responsible for a type of family counselling, advising mothers on domestic arrangements, employment and child care. An observer familiar with the program claimed in 1929 that, "The employment of a staff of trained social workers as investigators has proved essential to the accomplishment of the ends of the Act."[5] The annual reports of the commission up to 1930, while they recount many instances of practical advice-giving and assistance, do not bear out the contention that the counselling aspect of the job had a depth and complexity requiring the skill of professionals.

With the Mothers' Allowance Commission was created a counterpart in every community, a Mothers' Allowances Board, also consisting of five members, appointed by the municipal governments with the Minister's approval. The members of the boards, some of whom would represent the municipal, some the provincial interest received compensation for expenses but no salary. The board usually met once a month; their duty was to review the applications for allowances collected by the investigators and recommend approval or rejection. The recommendation went forward to the commission, and the final word was with the Queen's Park body.

The jurisdiction of the local boards followed the borders of counties, cities, separated towns, Indian reserves and districts in the north, though some of these were divided into sections. By the end of the 1920s, there were 110 boards operating, comprising 550 people occupied simply in a review of applications. In that period, the new case-load was increasing by no more than 300 cases yearly. Taking into account the allowances granted, cancelled, suspended and adjusted (upwards or downwards) and the applications refused, for each board there was an annual handling of fewer than 4,000 files or not more than thirty-seven cases on average yearly. Yet we are told that they usually met monthly or, in some cities, once a week. The boards certainly implemented the ideal of "community involvement in decision-making," but one wonders about the validity of these frequent meetings.

Remembering that the smallest family unit would be three persons, and noting that the average monthly allowance in 1921 was $35.65 monthly, we can be sure that the Mothers' Allowances program provided comparatively low incomes. In fact, the Mothers' Allowance was not expected to be enough to support the home. The chairman of the commission made this clear in an early report: "The present allowance is insufficient to maintain the family and can only be regarded as supplementary to the mother's earnings or other sources of income." The program did not aim to attain the end often ascribed to it: to allow the mother to pass the full day with her children. The original report on the feasibility of Mothers' Allowances had advocated an allowance "...sufficient to ensure that such widow will not be compelled to neglect her children and leave the home in order to gain her livelihood." The policy of the commission was to encourage the woman to spend more hours at home by arranging for part-time work. How much time at home or at work, how much in earnings or how much in allowance was not, at first, specified. All was at the discretion of the commission. There were few fixed regulations or policies; in a famous phrase "every case was considered on its merits." This method or lack of method has its advantages and may be workable when the case-load is small, but its disadvantages and inequities inevitably call for a measure of consistency. The commission was useful in the first years as a means of discovering and developing practical policies and rules in an unexplored field, gradually reducing the subjective discretionary factor to the point where judgment on cases could safely pass from the committee to the program director working through and under regulations.

This Mothers' Allowance program of the 1920s was, for Ontario, a precedent-setting venture, providing inspiration and illustration to shape our social-services future. It was the first direct money payment by the Province to a defined group of persons in need who qualified as of right, the harbin-

ger of all other categorical programs of income maintenance. Mothers' Allowances embodied a conscious effort to break with the grudging spirit of the past that often doled out aid in suspicion and shame. The humiliation of relief that had to be collected in person was replaced by cheques mailed out monthly to the recipient's home. Thoughtful efforts were made to preserve self respect. The program's oft-cited moral justification may sound somewhat quaint to our ears but retains a basic validity; it was that the mother is the guardian of the future citizen of the state and, as such, ought to be supported "By the majority of the beneficiaries," said Chairman Bryce, "the allowance is felt to be a reward for service, not a form of relief. This feeling is fostered by the Commission in insisting on the mother's responsibility to the state in bringing up its citizens."

The Mothers' Allowance payroll acquired its first 3,500 cases quickly within the first two years. Thereafter, until 1931, it grew slowly at an average rate of 270 cases per year. By the end of the decade, the average monthly allowance had risen $1.00 to $36.55, but this was a period of falling prices and the beneficiaries received a 20 per cent increase in actuality.

When the Conservatives under G. Howard Ferguson returned to power in 1923, they sustained the new program though there were changes in the commission. Peter Bryce was replaced as chairman in 1924 by The Honourable David Jamieson, MD. Shortly thereafter, vice-chairman Elizabeth Shortt resigned, publicly protesting that appointments to staff were being determined by politics; the Civil Service Commission was being completely ignored. Dr. Jamieson admitted that he was a committed Conservative and that Conservatives would get preference for jobs if they were as qualified as people who were not party members. Otherwise, the change of government had little effect on the established program, though through the rest of the 1920s eligibility for the allowance was not widened to include any further circumstances beyond widowhood or an insane or disabled husband. Mothers whose husbands had deserted, divorced them, or gone to prison, or where a child had been born outside of marriage remained unacceptable circumstances for aid.

The reports issued by the commission from year to year emphasized that the position of investigator was no sinecure. Case-loads were smaller than those assigned in the 1970s, two-thirds or less, but travel was more difficult. In northern areas in the winter, all transport away from the railways was by horse or on foot. The gravel roads of rural areas in the spring, with their frost boils and flooded culverts, presented traps even for the gaunt, high wheeled autos of the day. The changeover to mechanical transport by then was nearly total, but the road and rail network could be described as no more than partial. The records detail many a travel adventure of determined field workers pressing on by freight train, by dog team, horse and cutter, snowshoe or canoe, depending on the season, sometimes in vain to find only an empty cabin or a message of regret from a departed applicant. "Although road conditions for the average traveller are excellent in Ontario for the greater part of the year," cautiously prefaced the chairman with an eye on his political patrons, "the investigator is called upon to travel on the byways, narrow lanes and woodlands of Ontario and through the winter months these are often inaccessible."

Like the field workers, the Mothers' Allowances program pursued a calm and dutiful course through the 1920s. When a second income maintenance program, Old Age Pensions, was put in place in 1929, the commission structure was duplicated. The two commissions had in Dr. Jamieson a common chairman, a common office location at 43 Queen's Park Crescent, and the one administrative staff. In the field, there was a separate group of local boards to hear applications for Old Age Pensions and additional investigators to check on eligibility. But the stream of aged applicants which seemed unending to the dismayed authorities was unlike anything Mothers' Allowances had experienced.

Through the ten years to 1931, fewer Mothers' Allowance cases appeared each year, and the total amounted to 6,000 cases. In 1932, under the impetus of Depression unemployment, it jumped forward by nearly 1,500. Then, apparently because few additional applicants could meet the narrow eligibility criteria, or because relief came in as an alternative, in the worst years of the Depression the number of beneficiaries stood still and even started a slight decline. At this stage, municipalities had a financial motive to refer people to relief, where the senior government subsidy was 75 per cent, in preference to Mothers' Allowance, where the sharing was 50/50.

Such considerations figured in the decision of the new Liberal Minister, David Croll, to widen eligibility to include the mother with only one dependent child. This extension, legalized by the

1935 legislative session, nearly doubled the case-load in just four years. The 7,064 cases of October, 1934, rose to 13,937 in 1939. By 1935, government had come to accept that huge increases in welfare payments were inevitable to counter the ruinous statistics of unemployment; as much of this expenditure as possible might as well be directed into the Mothers' Allowance program, more publicly respectable than relief costs, though there was no federal sharing.

By 1937, it was also apparent that the 50 per cent of Allowances collected from municipalities was no longer defensible. Municipal governments overwhelmed or deeply burdened by unemployment relief must themselves be relieved. There was no consistency in the Province refunding from 75 to 100 per cent of local relief expenditures and bailing out defaulting municipalities with special grants, while at the same time trying to extract from them half the cost of Mothers' Allowances. From March 31, 1937, the Provincial Government assumed 100 per cent of the cost of Mothers' Allowances.

In the meantime, in the summer of 1934, the program had gone through the ordeal of staff reorganization and reduction imposed on the civil service by the new government. The jobs of the entire field staff of twenty investigators were eliminated. Henceforth, Welfare Minister Croll decided, any verification or counselling would be done by the field crew of provincial relief investigators who had recently joined the Department with the relief branch. Applications would now be taken by municipal clerks, assessed and recommended by local boards and passed up to the commission for approval.

This system lasted for less than three years. The officials of one level of government seldom remain long content with documents they must honour on sight passed to them from another set of unseen officials. Compounding the problem was the lack of time on the part of hard-pressed relief officers to carry out verification, not to speak of counselling, in a second program. When in 1937, the Province excused municipalities from sharing the cost of Mothers' Allowances, they also removed the participation of municipal clerks. Program staff were again assigned to field work, and in line with an increased case-load and a policy of closer inspection their numbers were increased to fifty-six.

At this point in 1937 the case-load was 11,420. By late 1939, it had reached a peak of 13,937 cases which would not be touched again for twenty-seven years. This was the first year of the war, and the opportunity to earn a living, so scarce for so long, was beginning to appear to recipients and potential applicants. Some mothers had sons in the Armed Forces whose allowances supported them. The Mothers' Allowance rolls began to thin out immediately, a 13 per cent net decrease in the first year of war instead of the usual 15 per cent rise. The decline continued until by 1945 there were 7,000 cases remaining, one half the total of 1939. In the new post-war prosperity, despite rapidly increasing population, the demand for this public assistance remained low. Not until thirteen years after the war, in 1958, was there a perceptible rising trend that carried the case-load over the 8,000 mark. The reciprocity between labour market demand and welfare demand could not have been more clearly etched.

During these two decades, benefits had been added to Mothers' Allowances and eligibility restraints subtracted. The basic rates of payment were raised a number of times, usually keeping pace with inflation. The differential between urban and rural rates of allowance was abandoned in 1948. In April 1942, the Department brought into effect an excellent arrangement with the Ontario Medical Association. At no charge, beneficiaries could obtain, services and drugs from the doctor of choice. The Province paid the association an agreed amount based on the total case-load and the physician collected all, or a pro-rated part, of the fee from the OMA. The Department evaluated the scheme as "the best on the continent," and it was progressively extended until finally replaced years later by general health insurance.

The eligibility of deserted wives for allowances has always been perplexing, balancing between the desire of the family to move from the municipal to the more advantageous provincial program and the aversion of the public and the government to appear lax or permissive towards absent husbands. Deserted wives had become eligible near the beginning of the program (in 1921), but only if the husband was not heard from for five years. Later, the period was lowered to three years, in 1946 to one year and in 1956 to six months.

In the autumn of 1940 the first ships arrived in Canada carrying British Child Guests, refugees from the holocaust expected from aerial bombing in the cities of England. Their placement and care became a major part of the Department's war-time efforts. *(Toronto Telegram)*

Chapter 6

WAR-TIME SERVICES

From September 10, 1939, to August 14, 1945, Canada was heavily involved in another of the momentous convulsions of the 20th century, the Second World War. Every aspect of Canadian life was affected and altered then and for the future, including the welfare services of Ontario. The war years marked a change in the focus of the Department from a preoccupation with income-maintenance programs to such crisis-related programs as caring for the families of interned enemy aliens, internees of all kinds, and British Child Guests. With the exception of services to children, the main programs of the Department in 1939 were of the income maintenance type, the payment of living allowances to the unemployed and unemployable, a crucially important function during the previous decade but of rapidly declining significance when the war effort recruited into the armed services and into the labour market every available person. Not only the ostensibly employable left the welfare rolls in the first years, but as the conflict went on employment opportunities appeared for marginal workers: those partly disabled, those on relief, mothers with children, and even the seventy-year-olds, potential and actual recipients of Old Age Pensions. The absolute numbers of dependents on the three allowance programs declined year by year in this time of full employment and did not begin to rise again until long after the war was over.

Public responsibility in Canada and Ontario for the non-material problems of civilians was scarcely acknowledged during the war, except in the form of traditional child welfare services and the suppression of delinquency. There was some new effort to assist the social adjustment of the serviceman and his family under Federal Government auspices.

One of the first effects of war upon the Department was stimulating: the arrival of child refugees from Great Britain during the crisis of 1940.

In the summer of that year, after the German Army had conquered France and the Low Countries, it was starkly evident that the British Isles would be subjected to aerial bombing and probably to invasion. Bombing was then thought far more destructive to life than it proved to be, and a holocaust was expected in the cities. In preparation, children of all ages were evacuated to the countryside, and, as a pilot project, some were sent over the Atlantic to Canada. The Canadian Government undertook to receive and care for these "British Child Guests." The greater number came to Ontario, where the Provincial Government offered full cooperation through the Department of Public Welfare.

In the autumn of 1940 the first ships arrived, and the children came from the east coast by railway and aeroplane to Toronto. There, the Deputy Minister, George Tattle, and the Director of Child Welfare, Burness W. Heise, were in general charge of the operation of reception and placement as agents of the federal Children's Overseas Reception Board. They had arranged for the children to be met by members of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. Student residences at the University of Toronto were taken over for temporary housing. The children's aid societies were alerted well in advance. As each society received descriptions of individual children, they matched them with volunteer foster parents, and the children were conducted from Toronto to their war-time homes. The placement and care process went smoothly; everyone worked in a patriotic spirit, and there was a surplus of voluntary help at every point.

The children were officially wards of the Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children, B.W. Heise. This was confirmed by the British Child Guests Act of 1941, ensuring that the superintendent had the authority to consent to medical treatment and the education of the children.

By early 1941, there were 777 child guests under the supervision of the children's aid societies. Of these, 610 had come under the inter-governmental plan, while 167 had been sent by private arrangement between families. Thousands had been expected, but the exodus from Britain stopped quickly. A passenger ship was sunk by a German submarine, and refugee children drowned. The sea

was too dangerous, and it was found that even the heavy bombing of "the blitz" produced fewer casualties than expected. It was safer and more reassuring to keep British children in their homeland.

The child guests in Ontario could not return as a group because of war conditions, but from 1943 onward a trickle of older children returned. Twenty-eight went home that year, and by the spring of 1945, 188 had gone. Most went soon after the war's end when ships returning Canadians and Americans offered ample space for the eastward trip. By the spring of 1946, only sixty-two yet remained, and by 1948 only thirty-seven were still lingering in Ontario, chiefly young women and men completing their college years.

The Department's spirit of service and successful administration of the program were recognized in the award of the Order of the British Empire given to B.W. Heise, the senior staff participant.

In Canada during the war more than 10 per cent of the total population was in the Armed Forces, the majority of these overseas at one time or another. There were thus thousands of Ontario families receiving the federal allowances and assigned pay due to dependent relatives of Navy, Army and Air Force personnel, and many families experiencing the material and non-material difficulties of prolonged separation. This represented a huge income maintenance case-load with its attendant social-service aspects. The Department of National Defence recognized the analogy of their program to public welfare and called upon the Provincial Department to supply their experience and aid. Curiously enough, it was the Children's Aid Branch that was made the locus of the Department's participation. The considerations were evidently that this branch had, through the network of children's aid societies, a much wider range than the Department field staff.

Thus, during most of the war years, from 1941 onward, the Children's Aid Branch was heavily involved in the policy making and field administration of three distinct federal-provincial functions. The Dependents' Allowances Board determined the eligibility for living allowances of wives, children, parents and other relatives of the thousands of men and women in uniform. The board also assumed responsibility for counselling and adjusting family problems. Closely associated was the Dependents' Board of Trustees, which investigated and recommended upon supplementary grants to the regular allowances and advised the military whether "compassionate leave" should be granted to service personnel where family problems were acute. As the war went on and members of the Armed Forces were discharged, many for reasons of ill health or injury, there were applications for pensions and veterans' allowances to be investigated and evaluated. Children's aid societies, with other public welfare staff, carried out this work for the Department of Pensions and National Health. Taking into account the three programs, the child welfare organization supervised and investigated some 14,000 military cases yearly.

In addition, in mid-1942 another crisis-related program, day nurseries, first appeared as a public service in response to the labour needs of a supercharged industry. The Minister of the time, Farquhar Oliver, introduced the Day Nurseries Act in the legislature in March, 1942, explaining that it was in anticipation of a "Dominion-Provincial Wartime Day Care" plan. "As we take up the slack in manpower," he said, "more and more women must go into war industries...Something must be done to help mothers find places for their children." The agreement between governments was signed July 1, 1942. The cost of day care for the children of women employed in essential work would be shared equally. Administration would be placed in the hands of municipalities and boards of education.

Immediately, ten full day-care nurseries in seven municipalities for 420 children were planned, with another ten centres for part-time care for 470. No flood of development followed the initial surge. When the program ended four years later, 1,135 children were being looked after in twenty-eight nurseries and 3,200 in the many part-time centres.

When the dominion-provincial agreement terminated on June 30, 1946, the Province was ready with a Day Nurseries Act of its own to continue the program. Though the Department's initiative was commendable, since public day care was a rare service in North America, the conditions of aid were stringent. Only municipalities were eligible for the 50 per cent provincial subsidy and for

Provincially funded day care became more and more necessary as mothers went off to work in Ontario's booming war industries. ***(Ontario Archives)***

full-care day nurseries alone. Private nurseries were held to certain standards by means of licensing. This proved restrictive, and as a result the program as a whole grew with painful slowness through the years.

Throughout the war period, the turmoil of society caused a marked increase in the demand for other types of child service. There was a rush of adoptions as families settled their affairs "for the duration," and the annual number, which had fallen as low as 300 during the Depression, rose to 1,241 in 1940 and to over 2,000 a year by the war's end.

In the 1942 annual report, the branch director considered that child neglect had increased greatly, the known infractions having risen 31 per cent in terms of cases and 96 per cent in terms of children involved. The case-load had been below 11,000 in the pre-war years and was over 16,000 when peace came again; in the outcome the increase was notable but not at all spectacular. There was widespread apprehension of a likely or actual outbreak of juvenile delinquency due to slack parental control, and the provincial police pointed to a 69 per cent increase from 1942 to 1943, an alarm much muted by Provincial Secretary Dunbar's observation that there had been twice as many cases back in 1927.

Child welfare authorities found, for the first time, that foster parents were in short supply, a symptom of a busy and preoccupied society. In addition, welfare staff was deficient in numbers and training, as experienced workers were drawn off to other military or civilian duties. The Children's Aid Branch was busy with the Child Guest program, the Dependents' Allowances Board, the Board of Trustees and the Veterans' Pensions investigations; faced with the increased demand for adoptive, protective and care services; and plagued by scanty resources. The branch could well label 1942 "a most difficult year" but still claim it was second to none in services rendered.

In 1944, the variety and volume of child welfare administration within the Department was recognized by elevating it to the status of a Division of Youth and Child Welfare under Director Bert

Beaumont. The four branches were Children's Aid, Day Nurseries, Children's Institutions and British Child Guests.

While child welfare activities tended to expand during this period, income maintenance notably contracted. The Mothers' Allowance case-load numbered 13,937 in 1939; by 1945 it had fallen to 7,000, cut practically in half as women eagerly took advantage of available employment. Old Age Pensions had been growing at a rate of 1,200 yearly and stood at 59,717 at the start of the war; the growth ceased, and at the war's end there were 1,600 fewer on the rolls, indicating that the labour market or augmented income had reduced dependency among the aged.

As might be expected, Unemployment Relief, a resource for the unemployed and semi-employable, reduced dramatically in the war years. The recently appointed Assistant Director, James Band, noted that in March, 1939, some 313,359 persons were on relief, nearly 9 per cent of the total population. In March, 1942, there were 32,704 persons, less than 1 per cent of the population. In 1943, the number was cut in half again and remained around 16,000 to the war's end.

In view of employment conditions, the Federal Government ceased to share in unemployment relief from March 31, 1941. Even though Premier Hepburn had assured municipalities that the Province would pick up 75 per cent of the cost, the next year his sober-minded successor reduced this to a 50/50 sharing. The legislation was changed in 1941, so that unemployment relief was not payable to persons who were employable. At the same time, the staff of the Unemployment Relief Branch continued to reduce the case-load of supposedly unemployable persons by rehabilitation.

By 1944, both Deputy Minister Heise and Director James Band were much exercised to explain why there should be any cases on relief in a time of total employment. They said that the program's development had revealed a new category of need, that of the adult who was not employable for various health reasons, usually associated with aging. The majority of recipients were over fifty years of age; females outnumbered the males. There was an added group of recipient women on relief, because, as deserted wives or spouses of pensioners, they were not eligible for Mothers' Allowance. Observations of the variable needs of this residual case-load provided a good part of the knowledge and inspiration for the introduction of relevant new services in the years to come.

Despite policy restrictions on any diversion of endeavour or money from the war effort, the Department managed to introduce a substantial new benefit in the form of a medical service for the thousands of recipients of Mothers' Allowances, Old Age and Blind Pensions.

The administrative structure and process of the Department of Public Welfare changed little during the war period. It comprised main office, the three commissions for Old Age Pensions, Mothers' Allowances and Soldiers' Aid, and the five branches for Children's Aid, Children's Institutions, Unemployment Relief, Refuges and Homes for the Aged, and, added in 1942, the Day Nurseries. But the turn-over in ministers was frequent due chiefly to a volatile political mood.

When Minister David Croll resigned in 1937, Premier Hepburn briefly assumed the portfolio and then appointed George Tattle to the newly created post of General Secretary of the Department. The original Deputy Minister, Milton Sorsoleil, was then sixty-eight years old and on the point of retirement. Sorsoleil left before the end of the summer, and for a time George Tattle managed departmental affairs.

After the October, 1937, general election, Eric Cross became Minister of Public Welfare and of Municipal Affairs. In the latter department, he found Edward A. Horton newly appointed as Deputy Minister. The two men apparently formed a congenial working relationship determined to tackle the severe problems confronting them. Most of the municipalities of Ontario were in financial trouble; only a trickle of tax revenue was coming in from their economically depressed communities and a torrent of relief payments was going out to the unemployed. The thirty-year-old Horton was a graduate of Harvard Business School, and after several years operating his own consulting firm he was invited by the Premier to join the Department of Municipal Affairs. In 1937, four years out of college, he was the Deputy Minister of both that department and the Department of Public Welfare, also holding the title of Director of Unemployment Relief because that program was the source of many of the problems he was to solve.

The subsequent record of Cross and Horton in municipal financial reform was good. We have noted the disagreements between the Minister and municipal councils, particularly the Toronto City Hall "beef trust." Deputy Minister Horton became involved in these disputes, was rebuffed and

tended to withdraw his interest from public welfare. He continued as nominal Deputy Minister through 1938, 1939 and 1940, leaving much of the actual administration to the General Secretary, George Tattle.

In the early part of 1941, Horton left Municipal Affairs to join the Wartime Prices and Trade Board as Director of the Textiles Division. Before the war's end, he had resigned from government service to form an equipment sales company which he operated with success until it was sold to employees in 1965. Horton then entered municipal politics and in 1967 became the first mayor of the newly-formed Borough of Etobicoke, serving two terms until retirement in 1972. He died in 1980 at the age of seventy-three.

When Eric Cross resigned after his bitter dispute with the Premier, Norman Otto Hipel, Minister of Labour, took over the additional job of Minister of Public Welfare as of November 22, 1940. The fifty-year-old Hipel had progressed from carpenter to contractor and lumber merchant and had represented South Waterloo in the legislature since 1930.

Hipel's first move in the new office was typical of his straightforward style and he appointed George Tattle as Deputy Minister. But Hipel only had one opportunity to pilot the annual Estimates

In March, 1942, Minister Farquhar Oliver (left) introduced the Day Nurseries Act in the provincial legislature, because as "more and more women go into war industries...something must be done to...find places for their children." ***(Ontario Archives)***

Harold James Kirby (centre) became Minister in 1942 after Premier Hepburn resigned and the cabinet was reformed under the leadership of Gordon Daniel Conant. ***(Ontario Archives)***

Norman Otto Hipel (above) had represented South Waterloo in the legislature since 1930. When Eric Cross resigned as Minister in 1940, Hipel took on the portfolio of Public Welfare, as well as Labour. ***(Ontario Archives)***

of Welfare through the House, when in March, 1941, he introduced a minor piece of legislation, the British Child Guest Act. In April, he had the satisfaction of conducting a large party of visitors from the legislature through his Galt Training School. Before the end of May, he was out of Labour and Welfare and in the Department of Lands and Forests.

The next Minister to represent the Department of Public Welfare, from May 27, 1941, to October 27, 1942, was Farquhar Robert Oliver, member for Grey South. Oliver had had a long and varied political career. Elected first in 1926 as a candidate of the United Farmers of Ontario, he had retained his seat through three subsequent elections. By 1934, he was the only UFO Member left in the legisla-

ture, and thereafter he became identified with the Liberals. He was highly regarded by Premier Hepburn who invited him into the cabinet in January, 1941, as Minister of Public Works. Hepburn later came to consider Oliver, then only thirty-seven years old, as his successor.

Oliver's chief work as Minister of the Department was the passage of the Day Nurseries Act and the signing of the complementary agreement with the Liberal Government in July, 1942. Soon afterwards the problems within the Liberal Cabinet came to a climax when the increasingly unpredictable Premier suddenly resigned his Office on October 21, 1942. Oliver followed his chief a week later, and the cabinet was reformed under the new Premier, Gordon Daniel Conant.

The fourth Minister of Public Welfare in two years was Harold James Kirby, who added the portfolio to his original office as Minister of Health. Kirby was a Toronto lawyer and operated an insurance and real estate firm. He had been a city alderman in 1934 when first elected for the Riding of Eglinton in the Liberal sweep. His appointment to Welfare was regarded by the newspapers as a sign of confidence in his strength in coping with difficulties.

But Harold Kirby had little opportunity to make any lasting impression. He was in Welfare just over six months and, though only forty-seven years old, was in poor health. In March, 1943, the cabinet was again reformed; Conant stepped down and was replaced as Premier by Harry Nixon in preparation for a general election in August. Farquhar Oliver, who had been Nixon's ally in internal party jostling, resumed the portfolios of Public Welfare and Public Works as of May 18, 1943. Eleven weeks later came the general election, and on August 4, 1943, the Liberals were decisively defeated and the Conservatives under the leadership of George Drew formed the government.

The Department staff perhaps welcomed a period of stability after the frequent ministerial changes, although there was some curiosity and perhaps trepidation concerning the prospective policies and actions of the new government. But in retrospect it would be difficult to illustrate that the past or future courses of public welfare expressed in any convincing way a difference between Liberal and Conservative philosophies. In fact, the general development of public welfare in Ontario has not been a subject of political party controversy. While there have been hot debates in the House and on the hustings and bitter criticisms and controversies over particular program aspects or proposed legislation, public welfare has been moulded from decade to decade much more by public beliefs and attitudes towards the poor or disadvantaged, by current notions as to dependency and government intervention and aid. The spirit of the time, popular morality, has been the guiding force, not the orthodox or eccentric ideas of right or left wing partisans. It is not strange that in a democracy party policy should express a high degree of coincidence with public opinion.

Premier Drew chose to continue the connection between the two portfolios of Health and Public Welfare. On August 17, 1943, he designated for both posts Reginald Percy Vivian, MD. Percy Vivian was a novice in provincial politics, having been elected to the legislature for the first time two weeks before. He had been prominent in public affairs in Durham County and one of its best known general practitioners. It was said that Doctor Vivian was long identified with progressive views in the field of health education and disease prevention.

During his tenure of less than three years, Vivian was chiefly occupied with producing an acceptable health services plan to cover the general public, largely financed by the province. That was an exercise fraught with difficulty, for neither the government nor the medical profession seemed prepared to contemplate any sort of compulsory, universal system, anything that smacked of "socialized medicine." Nevertheless, there was a very popular post-war expectation of and an election commitment to some kind of workable health insurance. In the sequel, Vivian put forward legislation in which the province adopted the frequently seen device to stultify an ostensibly fresh and progressive move: the municipalities (chronically underfinanced, fragmented and unwilling) were to be responsible for taking the initiative and carrying out the administration, whereupon the province would supply a partial subsidy or grant.

In accord with war-time limitations, improved welfare legislation was sparse but several useful measures probably reflected the Minister's public health interests. Mothers' Allowances were increased by 20 per cent. A mother with one child was given $5 in addition to the $50 flat rate per month, and Old Age Pensions moved from a maximum of $20 to $28. In Unemployment Relief, a defensible food schedule compiled by Dr. E.W. McHenry of the University of Toronto School of Hygiene was incorporated into the regulations. This was in 1944. In 1945, Special Home Care was

introduced to subsidize municipalities 50 per cent of a $40 payment for nursing and supplementary care for the semi-invalid aged, a precursor of the nursing home program yet to come.

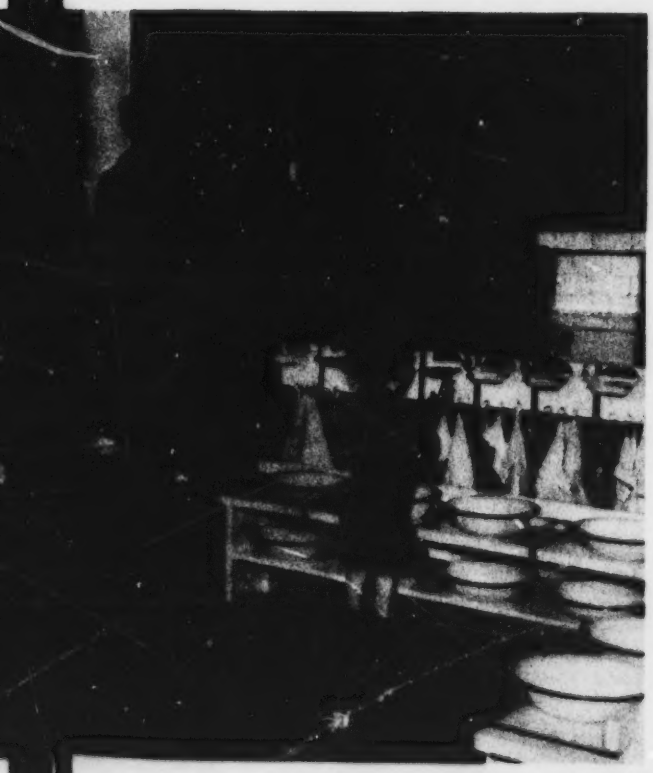
The over-long Speech from the Throne of 1944 had only 150 words for welfare and contained the ominous clause, "The Department of Public Welfare is being reorganized."

After George Tattle transferred to the Department of Health, his replacement was found within the senior welfare staff. Burness Witmer Heise, officially Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children and Director of the Children's Aid Branch, had held these posts in the Department for nine years, since 1934 when he transferred from his job as Director of the Hamilton Children's Aid Society. Heise, born in 1902 in Stouffville, had graduated from the University of Toronto's Department of Social Science in 1925 in one of the first classes of professional social workers. He was much interested in the development of that profession, taking a leading part in the Canadian Association of Social Workers and the Canadian Welfare Council. He was a contributor to professional journals, and in his early days had written two brochures: "Street Trades in Hamilton" and "Unmarried Mothers and Their Babies."

In the service of the Department, Heise had rewritten a portion of the regulations to implement child welfare legislation, and he devised a system of provincial grants to children's aid societies based on provincial criteria and varied according to the rating achieved by each society. Before the end of 1943, Heise was functioning as acting Deputy Minister, and by early 1944 he was confirmed in the appointment. At his instigation, a Division of Youth and Child Welfare was formed that year. Within the overall Department, it was headed by Bert Beaumont and composed of three units: Children's Institutions, Day Nurseries and British Child Guests.

On January 7, 1946, Premier Drew reshuffled his cabinet and announced that Dr. R.P. Vivian had resigned both as Minister, of Health and of Public Welfare to accept his appointment as Director of the Department of Health and Social Medicine at McGill University.

The Department had a new Minister once more, William Arthur Goodfellow of Northumberland Riding, and this time one who was to remain much longer than his predecessors, nearly nine years.



The war provided opportunities for both the study of children and their instruction. In this 1943 photograph on the left, the children are being taught hygiene at the Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto. ***(Ontario Archives)***

During the war, the connection between the portfolios of Health and Public Welfare was continued; Reginald Percy Vivian, MD (above), was appointed to the combined post on August 17, 1943. ***(Ontario Archives)***

A return to economic depression was expected with the winding down of war industries. The expected bust did not occur, and Ontario found herself fully equipped, well supplied and the fourth nation in the world as an industrial power.

Chapter 7

THE POST-WAR PERIOD

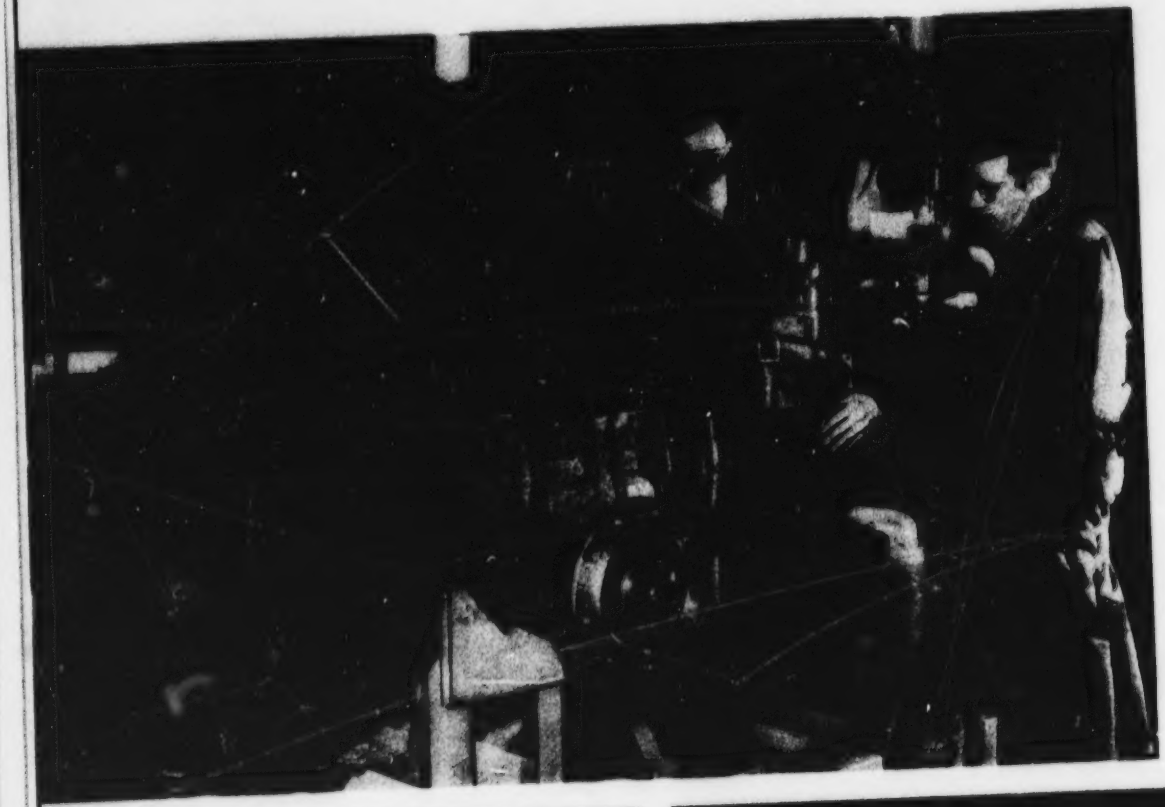
A new Minister in the first war-free years was a fresh starting point for the Department. Good times were ahead, but few thought so at the time. As the armament industry closed, people expected that the whole industrial machine would gear down to its former low speed; workers would be turned away from production lines in thousands to form the well-remembered unemployment queues. Despite the new unemployment insurance, public welfare might again drain the public treasuries for income maintenance. The Director of Relief expected "...a sharp increase in applications at the termination of the war from persons who will undoubtedly qualify on the basis of unemployability." Canadians generally were pessimistic about the economic future. After all, the war had ended the Depression and the end of war might well see it return. After high noon in the busy, exciting time of world conflict, many feared they could only look ahead to the bleak, pinched afternoons of the past. Canada found herself fully equipped, well supplied, the fourth nation in the world in terms of industrial power, without a competitor in a civilization half demolished and starved for the goods she could produce. After a few years of cautious exploration and gradual adjustment to mounting prosperity, Canadians and their governments began to get and spend hugely, beginning a lavish refurbishment of their shabby social scene that went on and on through a generation to ever higher standards.

The Department participated fully in the resources made available by this industrial upswing. The improvement was due in part to the wealth of resources available but just as much to the men and women in the government and in the Department who laid claim to a large share of those resources. They had the imagination and verve to develop new types of social service and the skill to obtain and implement the programs successfully.

William Goodfellow thought of himself as a progressive Minister, an improver and a developer of the programs in his charge. He was in tune with the new spirit of social consciousness and generosity, in part because it suited his sociable personality, perhaps his conscience and his ambition. Public welfare was his first cabinet post, and unlike most of his predecessors he had no other portfolio to distract or divide his attention. He was fortunate in finding in the Department a group of key senior staff who had recently risen to prominence and who shared his progressive and expansive outlook. James Band had moved from the directorship of Unemployment Relief to a more influential place as executive assistant with a hand in all the departmental services and reforms. Earl Ludlow had taken over as Inspector of the languishing Houses of Refuge program. The two major commissions were now headed by more directly responsive civil servants, S.N. Asbury in Old Age Pensions and Edward Plant in Mothers' Allowances. A.T. Bosanquet was director of Unemployment Relief.

The result was that in the next few years a tendency to expand and experiment began to develop within the Department. It was tentative and incomplete at first, as if the narrow resources and attitudes of former years still restricted action, but it grew bolder and more innovative until by 1950 most of the programs had been touched by some change that opened significant precedents for the future.

Despite the loss of federal financing, the first step forward was the decision in 1946 to continue the war-time children's nursery program in partnership with local government. The second was the official acceptance of a totally new concept, to transform the old refuges to real homes for the aged, together with the intent to create a chain of a new type of institution stretching across the province. When the first Homes for the Aged Act of 1947 turned out to be too thin to nourish the great growth



Once the war was over, returning veterans had to learn the difference between munitions and home-front necessities. These workers in Stratford assembled tractors just after the war ended.

One of the tasks for post-war Ontario was the reintegration into society of service personnel. On the right, Prime Minister George Drew inspects a Veterans' Affairs Rehabilitation display in 1948. *(Ontario Archives)*

Unlike most of his predecessors, Minister William Goodfellow (opposite page) had no other portfolio to distract or divide his attention. He thought of himself as an improver and developer of the programs in his charge; the result was a tendency to expand and experiment. *(Ontario Archives)*

expected, it was fortified by amended legislation that proved effective. The Department recognized at this time that, "The provision of adequate care for the Aged is one of the most acute problems facing us today."

Old Age Pensions was one of the primary points of difficulty, and Goodfellow's administration of the programs illustrates well intentioned innovation that in this one instance met with only mixed success. The receivers of Old Age Pensions had decreased through 1943-45, but in the next two years 10,000 more people were added to the payroll. When Goodfellow came into the Department in 1946, he found, according to this frank statement to the legislature, a great backlog of work, "a bad situation" where over 2,000 new applications and 60,000 case reviews, particularly in Old Age Pensions, had not been processed. He claimed to have corrected this within the year by "departmental reorganization" which appears to have been chiefly a matter of replacing the external appointees to the Old Age Pensions and Mothers' Allowance commissions with business-like civil servants, shaking up the local boards to brisker action, as well as increasing the field staff to 103 people. Not only was the backlog cleaned up, but the average time to deal with an Old Age Pension application was reduced from three months to forty days.

His handling of the question of how much these expedited pensions should pay was not so fortunate. That was a political problem of the first magnitude, a matter of millions of dollars one way or the other, and the difficulties had been accumulating for some time.

In 1943, the Federal Government had announced a war appropriation that would add $5 per month to the maximum pension of $20. The Province then added $3 as a supplement or bonus to bring the total to $28. Money had been inflating in value for the past twelve years, and the general standard of living was rising. In contrast, the allowance to the aged appeared niggardly. Strong pressure was put on the Provincial Government, as the administrating body, to increase the pension, and under the new Minister a further supplement was added in 1947. This did little to abate the pervasive and continual argument in and out of the legislature as to what the maximum should be generally and as to what particular cases should receive. The problem was basically in the divided responsibility of governments. The federal authority set the conditions and paid 75 per cent of the basic rate. The Province had only 25 per cent of the fiscal responsibility but was face to face with every case of needy and complaining pensioners and the disapprobation of the political opposition, press and public. Exacerbating the situation was the provision that on top of the federally fixed means test that determined who was eligible for the pension the Province had created a needs test for eligibility for the bonus. Few of the 70,000 pensioners and their advisors did not think that each deserved the bonus, so that requests, reviews and adjustments were never ending.

By 1949, the political and administrative difficulties were so troublesome that the Province announced that no further needs-tested bonuses would be granted. Instead, there would be $2.50 added universally to the maximum $30 pension. At this point, the Federal Government stepped in and raised the maximum to $40. The result had probably been the intention of the provincial initiative, and the Province would now pay the $2.50 as its 25 per cent of the $10 increase. The Department was now free of the task of testing for and issuing supplements, but a raise to $40 did little to satisfy the critics. Each year when the Department's estimates came before the legislature, the greater part of the time, the longest speeches and the hottest exchanges were spent on the question of reviving the bonus. Premier Frost was adamant that there should be no return to direct provincial supplementation of Old Age Pensions; any increases would be universal, shared between the two governments or nothing. He rebuffed the critics time and again on this point, the only occasions when he felt the urge to intervene in Goodfellow's able handling of the debate. Frost's final word on the subject was in 1951 when, with sincere passion ringing through his reply, in the legislature he traced the course of the "huge mistake" that had been the bonus system: "With our experience we will not do that again. There is nothing but tears and distress to try to do it the way we were doing it before. Never again would I want to get into the recriminations and misunderstandings which arose from that...."

Fortunately, when the next year came round pensions for those over seventy years old had been transferred to the federal domain, where they were granted without financial testing as Old Age Security. Those in the age range sixty-five to sixty-nine became eligible for the new program of

Old Age Assistance. It was to be shared by both governments equally, means tested and administered by the Department.

In the interim, Goodfellow and his staff pressed forward with a reform of the field service that was the other half of departmental administration covering the whole province outside Queen's Park. The local boards that had functioned for nearly twenty years in Old Age Pensions and thirty years in Mothers' Allowances were abolished in 1948.

Under the old system, people seeking aid went first to the local municipal offices where the clerk helped to fill out the application. This was sent to the office of the closest local board; the board gave it to a departmental investigator who made a visit to the applicant's home to verify details of eligibility. The papers came back to the local board which then formulated a recommendation to grant or not to grant the allowance. This was sent to the departmental commission in Toronto which made a final judgment and informed the applicant, local board and investigator. The interposition of a board composed of citizens, unpaid and outside administrative direction, was cumbersome. From the time of the first move by the applicant until he received a decision, up to seven months might elapse though three months was average.

What the Minister had in mind as an efficient substitute for the local board was the welfare unit system based on consistent policy and legality and designed to combine responsible municipal administration in field work with departmental headquarters' control of allowance grants. The plan was that the municipalities in a county, district or other area would cooperate to set up a welfare unit. Both municipal and provincial welfare field work would be done by the unit, handling Relief, Mothers' Allowances and Old Age Pensions. The existing local clerical and field staff, both provincial and municipal, would transfer to the municipally-controlled agency as employees. The Department would share salary and administration costs but would have no part in the field process. The welfare unit would receive all applications for Old Age Pensions and Mothers' Allowances and after verification forward these, with recommendations, to the relevant commission in Toronto for decision and payment. Which government would legally be the employer of the field staff was, in fact, obscure. The plan was dropped, and the Welfare Unit's Act, although passed, was never proclaimed, and so remained a curious dead letter on the statute books for a quarter-century.

In the sequel, after 1948, the system was developed that has lasted to the present day. Municipal or local interposition was avoided, and offices of the Department were located throughout the province. Eventually seventeen area offices were set up, with auxiliary offices here and there as required. The applicants could conveniently get in touch by mail, visit or telephone, and the provincial field worker would call at the home, write the application on the spot and send it to Toronto for judgment.

In theory, the decision to grant, not to grant, or to investigate further was made at first by members of the original commissions, in later years by the branch director. In practice, it was left to "decision clerks," reviewed by supervisors and signed, at a glance, by the director. Only novel or difficult cases required senior level discussion. Such impersonality of treatment was usually, if not always, an advantage to the applicant. An important lesson was learned. Where legal eligibility is based on objective, not moral or subjective considerations, personal knowledge of the applicant is unnecessary and, as often as not, a positive menace to his interests. Human contact for special services, such as counselling and investigation, could be maintained through a disinterested field staff. Appeals against unfavourable decisions, albeit through the same channels, could be made as often as the applicant persisted. The objectivity of the system was a guarantee of fairness, its simplicity a warrant of speed.

In this first phase of improvement in the larger programs between 1945 and 1949, sometimes the intended progress had to be redirected, as in the case of the welfare units, or corrected by a fresh start, as in the Homes for the Aged legislation. The child welfare field also benefitted from the provincial policy of promoting progress, and for the first time from the policy of supporting the service with substantial new funding, though the amendments to the Child Protection Act in 1949 also proved tentative and were superseded by the Child Welfare Act six years later. In the 1949 amendments, the Department accepted the new responsibility and became a major financial supporter of the child welfare system. From the first, the Province had exercised close leadership and control of children's aid societies but had given them little money, instead, by law, imposing that obligation

upon the municipalities who were their chief support. Now the Province undertook to pay to municipalities a reimbursement of 25 per cent of their child welfare costs. To the societies, the Province would pay a grant equal to 25 per cent of whatever the societies had obtained from private sources. This was obviously intended to encourage the raising of more income from local initiative or charitable donations; not more than 12 per cent of total children's aid societies' receipts were from non-governmental sources and the percentage was declining. The effects of the 1949 amendments were to increase provincial payments to the societies from $170,000 to over $500,000 and to transfer $1,160,000 annually from municipal to provincial costs.

When explaining these new subsidies to the legislature in March, 1949, Goodfellow went out of his way to deride the former grant system. The grant bore no relation to the amount of CAS expenditure. In fact, the less the deficit was between receipts and expenses, the higher was the provincial grant; the old method, the Minister concluded, was simply unsound.

William Goodfellow was happily named, so thought the public, the press and all members of the legislature. Good fellowship, cheerful friendliness, personal attention to everyone's problems characterized his public image. Though only forty-five when he came to the Department, he had been in politics, municipal and provincial, for a quarter of a century. He was well practised in the arts of persuasion: pleasing, avoiding argument and creating an all-round atmosphere of cordiality. Debates in Departmental Estimates each session were less debates than dissertations on the Minister's intentions before an admiring audience. When Opposition Members rose to comment – Communist, CCF and Liberal – they seldom failed to preface their remarks with a paragraph of praise for Minister Goodfellow and his equally kind and efficient staff, repeating this one after another like a litany. The compliments sometimes grew fulsome, as when the Member for Bellwood (Communist) declared that Goodfellow looked like Abraham Lincoln and was like him in his greatness, and Agnes McPhail (CCF) said this was true but Goodfellow was better looking.

One result of his persuasive personality was that much proposed welfare legislation went through the House on a tide of goodwill. The prosperity of the period also created a mood of uncritical generosity towards social services, in sharp contrast to the attitudes in the legislature during Depression days when the first Welfare Minister promised grudging and suspicious MPPs more rigid restrictions and a crackdown on the undeserving poor. The policies and personality of Goodfellow and his advisors from 1946 to 1955 opened up for the Department a wide field of expansion in what could be labelled "an era of good feeling."

In the period 1947 to 1955, from the beginning to the end of Goodfellow's Ministry, there were a dozen important pieces of legislation passed adding new phases of service to the Department's jurisdiction.

There was a general election in 1955, following which Premier Leslie Frost reformed his cabinet. Louis P. Cecile became Minister of Public Welfare on August 17, 1955. William Goodfellow took over Municipal Affairs, as he was to take over several other portfolios in later years until he became popularly known as "The Minister of everything." He left politics in 1963 and, after a long residence in the United States, died at Burlington, Ontario, on May 21, 1983.

Both polio and rehabilitation of the handicapped were characteristic of post-war Ontario. Here, Premier Leslie Frost greets polio victims on the bus that brought them to Queen's Park *(Ontario Archives)*

For nearly forty years after 1912, the system of public and charitable homes for the aged languished and deteriorated. The overcrowding in this Newmarket institution during 1953 was a hangover from the dismal days of the past. ***(Cooper)***

Chapter 8

FROM REFUGE TO HOME

The oldest program in the Department's repertoire was the least regarded. These were the "Refuges" of provincial reports, variously known to themselves as Houses of Providence, Houses of Industry, Homes for the Aged and Infirm, and Homes for the Friendless. In 1930, the new Department had inherited the supervision and subsidy of seventy-four refuges with a population of 5,272 "inmates." Included were forty city refuges chiefly operated by charitable corporations which usually had financial agreements with the city government, though they raised the bulk of their funds from private sources. The thirty-one county refuges and the three district refuges were administered under municipal auspices and support.

The refuges system, by 1930, had a history nearly a century long, and its functions had changed through time. The few private institutions established prior to Confederation had the flavour of poorhouses; they offered permanent shelter to those unable to survive in the community: the aged, the physically handicapped, the mentally retarded who had no family or friends willing to provide care. After Confederation, the casual financial support of the province was regularized in the Charity Aid Act of 1874 which established a provincial grant of so much per person per day, at that time effectively covering 30 per cent of the operating cost of charitable institutions. These private institutions increased from four in 1874 to thirty-three by 1892.

There was no regular system of outdoor relief or income maintenance in mid-19th century Ontario. Society had its proportion of derelict and hopelessly destitute persons, more numerous and obtrusive in the urban scene but also bothersome in the towns, villages and farming settlements. The charitable organizations, in an approximate way, took care of the problem in the larger cities. Some provisions had to be made for the rest of the province.

In accordance with the questionable belief that the municipality not the province had basic responsibility for welfare, the Union Government in 1866 imposed the Municipal Institutions Act, making it mandatory for all counties, cities and separated towns to establish, independently or jointly, a house of industry or refuge. In the next Session, after Confederation created the new Province of Ontario, the mandatory provision was rescinded.

The result of this rescension and failure to offer any financial aid to municipalities was that in the next twenty-three years, a full generation, only nine county houses of refuge appeared. In order to stimulate growth, the Province decided in 1890 to offer substantial capital funds for the building of municipal institutions. The Speech from the Throne explained:

> *Public attention has of later years been directed to the inadequate provision by County Municipalities for the care and support of the aged, helpless, and poor within their boundaries, only nine Counties having availed themselves of the provision of the law authorizing the establishment of Industrial Farms and Houses of Refuge in connection therewith.*

The need for more institutional care was evident, because in many areas aged and infirm people were lodged in the jails under the pretext of vagrancy. Therefore, said the Government, "with a view of encouraging the erection of County Houses of Refuge in connection with Industrial Farms and of thereby relieving the goals of this unfortunate class of their inmates, a measure will be submitted for your consideration...." The resultant Act "Respecting the Establishment of Houses of Refuge," effective April 7, 1890, was permissive. The chief feature was an offer by the Province to pay 25 per cent of the cost of new or acquired institutional buildings, farm acreage and barns up to a maximum of $4,000. This was offered to cities and towns as well as the counties. The nine refuges

already operating were also eligible for a capital subsidy, retroactively. There was, as yet, no maintenance subsidy for operational costs.

This financial stimulation was apparently unsuccessful, and the Provincial Government moved from persuasion to compulsion. A new Municipal Houses of Refuge Act was passed in June, 1903. This conveyed the blunt message, "Every County shall establish a House of Refuge before January 1, 1906." The legal approach was more effective, and in the next nine years, through to 1912, the list of municipal refuges grew to thirty-one, almost equalling the thirty-three charitable institutions. For both municipal and charitable refuges, 1912 was a year of new legislation which was to stand unchanged for more than a generation.

The Charity Aid Act had come down relatively unchanged from 1874. It offered no capital subsidies but allowed maintenance grants of a few cents a day to the three types of charitable institutions covered: hospitals, refuges "for the aged and friendless" and orphanages. The new Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act of 1912 brought significant changes for hospitals, but there was little or no change for the charitable homes providing domiciliary care for adults and children. The latter continued to receive a grant of 2¢ per child per day, and the adult shelters retained the long established grant of 7¢ per resident per day.

In the same year, the Government made a renewed effort to spur progress in the municipal field. The Houses of Refuge Act of 1903 had not, despite its compelling legal language, impelled every county to establish a refuge. The 1912 Houses of Refuge Act now admonished that any county corporation "which has not already established and erected, shall forthwith establish and erect...and maintain a house of refuge for the reception of those classes of persons described in Section 14."

Those to be admitted were described as "poor and indigent persons," as well as "persons without means of maintaining themselves and able to work who do not do so," and the feeble-minded. The custodial rather than paternal purpose of the refuges is expressed in the authority which the Act gave to municipal councils to apprehend such persons and detain them in the refuge without any other legal process, a course of action that was certainly not consonant with the traditions and forms of British and Canadian law. The inmate's property or estate could be seized as well as his person, though in deference to the sanctity of property, a county court procedure was required.

The Act specified that all fit inmates should "be kept diligently employed at labour," and it gave the superintendent of a refuge the power to assign the person to whatever work he was able to do and to apply any earnings to the support of the inmate's family or to the costs of his keep in the refuge. These workhouse provisions could be enforced by punishment if the inmate was disorderly, disobedient or lazy.

By this date, the population of northern Ontario had risen to a level that required the same considerations as the southern part of the province. In recognition of the fact that there was no county organization in the northern districts to bear the administrative costs and efforts of joint projects like houses of refuge, the separate District Houses of Refuge Act of 1912 offered, in addition to the $4,000 capital grant, the first operating subsidy in the municipal field. The grant was 7¢ a day as for the private refuges. This latter legislation was not mandatory; a refuge could be established if a majority of the municipalities in a district agreed to do so. In the long stretch between 1912 and 1950, only four of the ten districts provided centres of care for the aged. In other districts, the senile aged were transported to insane asylums in the south, while the feeble ones managed as well as they could with whatever help might be available.

For nearly forty years after 1912, the system of public and charitable homes for the aged languished and deteriorated. The indifference was not due to the disappearance of need. The population of Ontario nearly doubled from 2.5 to 4.5 million; the proportion living in urban areas changed from 52 to 72 per cent; urbanization and industrialization brought their well-known effects on family and community life, subverting the relationships that tended to support the elderly in earlier days. In all probability, during the period there were hundreds of neglected elderly and infirm persons who suffered a degree of hardship that institutional care would have relieved. But in Ontario, as elsewhere, the first two decades of the 20th century was a period of little interest in social welfare legisla-

tion. The brief revival of concern immediately after the 1914-1918 war was of no benefit to homes for the aged. The introduction of Old Age Pensions in 1929 may have satisfied many that society's obligation to the aged poor had been fulfilled.

At the turn of the century, the houses of refuge, public and private, housed some 2,000 persons. In the next thirty years, the number of refuges increased from fifty-four to seventy-four, but the number of residents rose nearly 150 per cent to 4,890. Overcrowding and the demand for space continued to grow apace. This was the program situation inherited by the Department of Public Welfare in 1931. But the problems were unrecognized or attention was distracted by the more immediate worries of the Depression. In 1931, the Minister of Public Welfare had nothing to say of the refuges in his initial review of programs, except that according to recent inspection they were "quite clean and comfortable and operated in a humanitarian way."

The Ross Commission had had apparently little opportunity to review conditions in the existing refuges, but they noted the failure of many cities and towns to keep up with the demand and to provide enough spaces even at the prevailing low standard: "Lacking such provision in the cities, many persons who should be inmates of the Houses of Refuge are found inmates of jails, jail farms, homes for incurables and mental hospitals." The commission recommended that cities as well as counties be required by law to establish and maintain municipal refuges.

After 1931 overcrowding greatly intensified. Up to the end of World War II only four new refuges were added, but the resident population packed into them increased by nearly 5,000 in 1930; there were nearly 10,000 in 1944 occupying much the same living space.

For over fifteen years after 1931 the Department maintained a reticent and optimistic attitude towards the refuge system, merely reporting the statistics of grants and residents year by year. But in the bolder environment of the war years, the Inspector of Refuges, S.L. Charlton, began to voice complaints in his public reports with increased and ever more emphatic dissatisfaction. In 1943 he noted that the houses of refuge were "filled almost to capacity;" they were old buildings and fire hazards. He suggested that the many "incurables" should be moved to more specialized institutions for care and treatment and to make room for the elderly. In the next annual report, he characterized the buildings as "old, crowded and unsafe" and noted that in ten years the resident population had increased 16 per cent despite initial overcrowding. Again, in 1945, he repeated his complaints about "obsolete" buildings used far beyond their capacity.

With the war ended, something could be done. In 1946, a new inspector, L.E. (Earl) Ludlow, came on the scene and took up the same theme as his retired predecessor but with more vigour and effect. Ludlow was shocked by conditions in the houses of refuge and determined to reform the system. He used statistics as a weapon, pointing out that social pressure would be generated by ever-greater numbers of applicants for care who were frustrated by a static and decaying service. "The population of Ontario increased 111 per cent from 1901 to 1951," he wrote, "However, persons sixty years and over increased 218 per cent. This in itself stresses the need for increased accommodation." He asserted forcefully, if not quite accurately, that since 1900 the number of refuges had not increased but their occupants increased from 2,000 to 6,000; that was the measure of overcrowding.

Earl Ludlow in later years often described with the vividness of an actor's rhetoric – for he had theatrical experience – the living conditions he found in municipal refuges. He recalled the close-packed wards, with the bedrooms and halls filled with men and women of various ages: most of them very old, some helplessly retarded and scarcely out of childhood, people in every state of body and mind. The alert and sensitive aged had to live side by side with the hopelessly senile and incontinent; the able-bodied with the crippled; the bedridden and ill with the healthy and the obstreperous; each disturbing and distressing the other with their different needs, complaints and behaviours; all thronged together in unsegregated closeness to live out the balance of their days. There was seldom enough elbow room, enough silence, enough attention, or enough access to the common facilities for bathing, toileting, eating or sleeping. The refuge was typically a drab, makeshift scene for milling and miserable humanity, the sordid intimacy only modified by the opportunity for fresh air and occupation on the attached farm and the commendable efforts of the management and staff towards

order, cleanliness and kindly treatment. Conditions, unhappily, tended to worsen year by year as a harrassed administration tried to squeeze out room for more supplicants on the long waiting lists of the municipal clerk.

Ludlow was a man with a vision of how to transform these establishments into centres of care and comfortable, even contented, living that would truly deserve the name "homes for the aged." Moreover, he was a man with shrewd and practical ideas of motivating the right people to implement his plans. From 1946, he mounted a vigorous campaign on two fronts. The first was within the Department to obtain the legislation that would finance the municipalities and private charitable boards with sufficient public funds to achieve the result. Here, his task was relatively easy, for the Minister, William Goodfellow, and the Deputy Minister, James Band, readily accepted and shared his vision. They carried the message so well in political circles that the requisite Homes for the Aged acts were, in a few short years, on the statute books, expressing a generous provincial government policy that grew and blossomed for a generation.

The second front was with the municipalities and the private boards of directors to sell them the novel concept of a home for the aged that would be a showplace instead of a shame to the community, that would house not as heretofore the paupers who had gone "over the hill to the poorhouse" but would take good care of the respectable matriarchs and patriarchs, rich or poor, of local society.

After the first Home for the Aged Act was passed in 1947, Earl Ludlow and his assistants travelled continually through Ontario, visiting one municipal council after the other. They carried the message of the need for more accommodation for the aged, the necessity of radical rebuilding of the local refuge according to the new plans and the opportunity now afforded in the new law for adequate financial and political support. The people from the Department expended every effort to convince the municipal people, talking to county councils, townships, town and city councils, to officials and clerks, to individual councillors. They explained, lectured, illustrated and cajoled, using whatever approach might be effective in the situation.

Ludlow was irrepressible in his enthusiasm, and his personality could imbue the most formal meeting and the most dour civic dignitaries with good-humoured feeling. A favourite device was to invite the entire council to visit the local refuge for the aged just at mealtime. A walk through the drab and narrow corridors, through the cheerless wards jam-packed with beds, usually ended in the dining hall. The councillors, who had seldom or never been in the refuge or only at the best of times, were usually appalled. More than one was nauseated by the odorous if not odious scene. They often decided on the spot that a great change must be made for the sake of those poor fellow citizens, for the honour and pride of the municipality. The old refuge must be torn down and replaced by a modern home for the aged with all requisite facilities; it should be well equipped and staffed to give a level of care and a quality of life that accorded with the self-respect of the community and its moral convictions about the respect due to aged people.

In general, however, municipalities did not require shock tactics; they responded wholeheartedly to the newly-perceived needs of their "senior citizens." Beyond all expectation, the counties, towns, cities and districts entered in increasing numbers into partnership with the Department to build a home for the aged system on the new model. The same can be said of the boards of charitable institutions. The initial efforts of Earl Ludlow as Director of the Homes for the Aged Branch and his staff, backed by the senior officials of the Department and authorized by the progressive legislation of the province, started a process of development that accelerated through the next twenty-five years, producing a system of institutional care that was unsurpassed in North America and probably in the world.

Municipal homes for the aged

In the Spring Session of 1947, Goodfellow introduced the first Home for the Aged Act pertaining to municipal refuges. In addressing the legislature, the Minister said, "We visualize in this program, which is incorporated in these bills, a different type of institution entirely from that which we have been accustomed to refer to as the Houses of Refuge." In this and later years, he described the new type. The first factor of note was that the new institution was to be reserved for the aged. The very title "Home for the Aged" marked the change in concept.

The houses of refuge had, in fact, grown into residences chiefly for the elderly, but they had been built and long operated on the notion that they were for adults of any age who were incompetent to support themselves. Now old age, not indigency, was to be the criterion of admission, and the homes would attract voluntary residents; there would no longer be any threat of assignment and detention. The old idea of the residence as a dumping ground for hapless indigents was swept aside and replaced by the plan of a home-like centre of care for the more feeble aged of whatever financial status. The workhouse aspect was abandoned with the closing down of farming operations, and the poorhouse aspect was left behind with the admission of aged persons whatever their income. It was expected that some future residents would be able to pay the full cost of care, and the provision of Old Age Pensions meant that practically everyone could pay some part of the maintenance charge.

The concept of the new institution, that it should offer the features of a good private home, and the idea that it should provide a degree of nursing and similar care for the ailing, implied many changes in building design, equipment, facilities and staffing. One prominent feature was segregation of groups of residents from the congregate throng of the refuge. The new institution was a home for the enfeebled aged but, as was immediately recognized, there are degrees and kinds of enfeeblement. The model home would provide for three broad categories: nursing care, special care and normal or ambulatory care. There would be also a fourth area set aside as married quarters.

At the time a publicly-supported nursing home system did not exist, and the home for the aged assumed the role. Nursing care would be available for aged persons sufficiently incapacitated to be confined to bed full-time but who did not require the intensive treatment of an active or chronic hospital. Special care designated the facilities necessary to look after and stimulate those aged men and women whose minds had degenerated to some degree of senility or whose bodies to some degree of cripplement. Normal or ambulatory care referred to all the others, those who were relatively alert in mind and active in body but who could not manage to live comfortably in a private home, because they could not cope adequately with such ordinary routines of living as meal preparation, housekeeping, personal hygiene and transportation.

At this point, it should be noted that there was never any intention that people able to care for themselves should be coerced or persuaded to move into a home for the aged. The intention of government from the first was that the elderly were to be encouraged to remain independent as long as possible, and to that end there developed subsidized housing, the provision of drugs and prosthetics, general medical attention and various kinds of home care. The new-style home for the aged was not to be a new-style poorhouse where old people had to go in order to obtain the common supports that they needed to live with comfort and decency.

As the program has developed through the years there has been much confusion on this point. Critics expostulate that we should never terminate the social life of the aged in the community by "putting them away in institutions," as if entrance to a home for the aged was analagous to directing active healthy people into chronic hospitals. The fact is that just as a percentage of the total population falls ill and must seek care in active treatment or chronic hospitals, so there is a percentage of the aged that becomes enfeebled and must seek institutional care. The one difference is that aging is irreversible; few could hope to emerge from the institution cured of the ills of senility and physical deterioration. The Department and the municipalities were always clear that only a small proportion of aged people would ever see the inside of a home for the aged. There was never any intention to warehouse a whole generation of the elderly.

Such assurances will remain unconvincing to inflexible critics who regard institutions as unexceptionally an evil. But these same critics might reflect that an old person or a couple living "in their

own home in their own community" may often feel more isolated, lonely and neglected, enduring a far more abnormal life of anxiety, isolation and apathy than if they were in the solicitous, sociable and stimulating environment of a well run institution. So it was that the new-style home for the aged was intended for such enfeebled elderly persons who could no longer be provided for in their own homes. The only alternative would be for the many services of various kinds to be laid on in those private, single homes, an impossible situation in which these homes would turn, more or less, into institutions in miniature.

The segregation of residents into three groups was desirable in order to surround them with an environment and facilities suited to their needs. For this reason, the homes were built with separate wings radiating from a central block, and usually on one level so that residents could move around with ease and be more readily evacuated in case of danger. Nursing stations and medical arrangements were necessary for the bed-care population; the special-care cases required safe areas and

personal attention. The use of separate wings had the further benefit of shielding from the sights and sounds of sickness and senility those who were in a better state to appreciate their surroundings and use the recreational areas, the craft and hobby rooms, gardens and chapel.

These comforts and conveniences were added to each new home and improved with experience. There were tuck shops, hairdressing salons, and eventually bars for drinking and dancing. The home management worked to maintain a close relationship with the surrounding community, so that residents could go out freely on tours, to local entertainments or for personal reasons. Ladies' auxiliaries and service clubs were encouraged to visit the home and sponsor a variety of activities to interest and entertain the people.

In every aspect, purpose, appearance, operation and quality of life, the new home for the aged in Ontario was a far cry from the Victorian Age type of refuge which had lasted up to 1950 but thereafter vanished rapidly without a trace. Scarcely less remarkable, public attitudes of shame and aversion to any connection with the dingy refuges vanished as quickly, and the new home became a place of civic pride and visitation. Residence in such a home became an acceptable alternative for all groups in the community.

To what origin can we ascribe the idea for the new-style home, with all its novel aspects of transformed intention, differential and extensive care, operational improvements, so successfully

incorporated in financial support and physical design? Apparently, most of the credit for the concept must go to Earl Ludlow, erstwhile Inspector of Refuges and for fifteen years Director of the Homes for the Aged Branch. The merit for rapid and universal establishment of the system is due to many responsive, humanitarian people: those in the Department of Public Welfare, the provincial and municipal governments and the supporters of the charitable institutions that shared progressively in the development.

The two statutes of 1947, the Homes for the Aged Act and the District Homes for the Aged Act, were soon found to be inappropriate for the new purposes. They retained too much of the language of the Refuges Act; their authority fell far short of the Department's intentions.

After several years' experience of the shortcomings, Ludlow, Deputy Minister Band and Minister William Goodfellow were able to frame a new piece of legislation and pilot it through the legislature. It expressed, in nearly definitive form, their modernistic idea of what a home for the aged

Shocked by the conditions in the houses of refuge, Minister Earl Ludlow determined to reform the system. Gradually, what had been grim institutions were transformed into true homes for the aged. ***(Russell)***

program should be. This was the Home for the Aged Act of 1949, and behind its sparse and formal phraseology, a revolution was made in the institutional care of the elderly.

The District Homes for the Aged Act of 1947 was merged in 1949 with the general municipal Homes for the Aged Act. In the districts, a board of management would serve as the representative of all the participating municipalities in the governance of a home, just as all the municipalities in a county were to be represented by a committee of management of the county council or, in a city, by the city council.

In 1949, for the first time the cities and towns separated from a county were legally required to establish homes for the aged. They had met the most urgent situations in some instances by purchasing care from urban charitable institutions, but these homes were themselves overcrowded and unable to cope with the number of old people who could not, or should not have been left in private accommodation or occupying beds in active-treatment or chronic hospitals that were equally hard-pressed for space. For such reasons, the Homes for the Aged Act of 1949 made it mandatory for cities and separated towns to provide a municipal home. Legal compulsion joined with financial incentives and the progressive spirit of the decade to stimulate the great expansion that followed.

From the period of re-enactment of the legislation, that is, 1947 to 1949, a remarkable growth of municipal homes for the aged began and continued for twenty-five years until financial restric-

tions were applied in 1972. During this time, all the objects of the new style home and its system of care as envisaged in 1947 were fulfilled beyond all expectation.

Every municipal residence for the aged existing in 1947 was replaced by a modern building; the total number of homes rose from thirty-one containing 2,500 beds to eighty-three containing over 17,000 beds. The basic statistical increase of nearly 500 per cent in quantity of beds was matched by a similar increase in quality of care. The municipal residential system for the aged was expanded and transformed.

The increase was first apparent by the early years of the 1950s, as each year two or three new homes for the aged, each with accommodation for 100 to 200 persons, were added to the list. At the same time, another two or three established homes would be constructing extensions of anything from twenty to 100 beds, converting old buildings, wing by wing, into modern centres of care.

The quantity of buildings was astonishing viewed in any terms: cost, staff, number of residents accommodated or total homes produced. All those counties and districts in Ontario that had avoided home for the aged involvement now built a large institution; some built two or three. Every Ontario city constructed a home; Metropolitan Toronto had four by the end of the period. The size of each one varied between 100 and 200 beds.

All the counties and districts that had founded houses of refuge up to fifty years before, most of which had never since added a major improvement, now in this surge of development tore down the old refuge and erected one or several homes for the aged. These new structures were as fine and modern as any public building in the municipality.

This picture of achievement is incomplete until we add the similar progress in the charitable institutions.

Charitable institutions for the aged

A group of charitable institutions had existed since the mid-19th century, contemporary with the municipal houses of refuge. They served much the same purposes, providing residential care for the feeble aged and for a few other incompetent persons. By 1950, the charitable institutions were thirty-six in number with a population of 3,000 residents, compared to the thirty-eight municipal houses with some 3,700 persons.

The institutions were operated by incorporated boards of directors and sponsored and supported by religious groups, fraternal societies and similar membership associations, usually for the benefit of aged members though often accepting applicants from a wider population. The institutions were charitable in that they sought no monetary profit, though, in fact, as a whole 70 per cent of their residents paid the full cost of care. A few institutions were self-supporting on residents' fees or nearly so.

Through the years, the Provincial Government had been more generous to these voluntary institutions than to municipal refuges. From the 1874 enactment of the Charitable Aid Act, the Province had paid each qualifying charitable corporation a grant of a few cents per resident per day, which had at first covered up to 30 per cent of the actual maintenance cost. In the long period of governmental indifference to group care for the aged, stretching through the first half of this century, the real money value of the grant had fallen to a token amount. The 7¢ per person per day, a respectable amount at the turn of the century, had risen only to 10¢ by 1950.

The new provincial policy from 1947 of promoting greatly improved homes for the aged and expanding their capacities through persuasion and support was soon extended from the municipal to the charitable system. The Charitable Institutions Act had been the governing legislation since 1927, and in 1950 this was amended to offer a capital grant from the Province of $1,000 for each bed established through the building or rebuilding of an institutional home for the aged conforming to governmental requirements. Four years later, as of June 1, 1954, the capital grant was doubled to

Part of the new system was intense and personal care for clients who required it.

$2,000, and in 1956 it was raised to $2,500 per bed, or 50 per cent of the actual cost, whichever was less. In 1953, the 10¢ per day for maintenance was increased to 20¢ and in 1957 raised again to $8.00 per month.

These financial incentives proved moderately effective; in the six-year-period after 1950 the number of charitable institutions rose from thirty-six to fifty-four, although the increase represented not more than 1,200 additional beds or units of accommodation. Also, seven of the seventeen additional institutions were residential centres for the blind rather than the aged and operated by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. These were certainly worthy of the assistance, but we should note that facilities for the aged specifically were not augmented as much as might appear by the bare statistics. Notable too is the fact that few of the old institutions extended or renovated their buildings in the period. By 1958, the Department succeeded in obtaining new legislation with more generous and more just financial provisions.

In 1958, the Charitable Institutions Act of 1956 was amended in a significant way. The capital grant of $2,500 per bed was retained, but the maintenance subsidy, which had been a universal $8 per month for every resident, was made much larger – 75 per cent of actual net cost – though now applied to fewer residents. The actual daily cost of care in the home was calculated, thus establishing a *per diem* rate. If a resident was not able to pay the full *per diem* cost, in part or in total, the net deficit of the institution in respect to that person was calculated and the Province paid the board 75 per cent of it.

In other words, instead of a flat grant of so much per day for every resident, the new system subsidized the cost of maintenance for those unable to pay in full. This ensured that the more "charitable" the institution was in its selection of residents the more would be the public subsidy. A few institutions that maintained a policy of admitting very few charitable cases now experienced reduced government aid, but most received substantially larger grants under the new system. In 1955, for example, the total provincial payment to institutions for maintenance was $248,309, whereas in 1961 and thereafter the payment trebled to the $700,000 range.

Although charitable institutions receiving public capital and operating subsidies were from this period prohibited from excluding applicants on the basis of religion, race or sodality, understandably they have retained the tendency to attract the majority of their residents from the church, racial, national or fraternal group that founded the institution. Such selectivity usually results in a greater percentage of residents prosperous enough to pay the full cost. Thus, in most charitable institutions nearly 70 per cent of revenues is derived from residents' fees, in comparison to municipal homes for the aged where not more than 50 per cent is "full paying." The advent of other government allowances, such as Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan received by residents in both types of residences, somewhat clouds any present-day attempt to determine to what extent residents are supported by "public" or "private" income.

After 1958, the subsidy system and the policy for charitable institutions for the aged remained firm for the next two decades. The capital grant was $2,500 per bed, and the maintenance subsidy was 75 per cent of the net cost to the institution. The institutions were encouraged to adopt the three types of care (ambulatory, special and bed care) and to expand both in quality and quantity of service. They resembled the municipal homes for the aged in all essential ways, although most institutions retained the characteristics of their origins.

The growth of charitable institutions for the aged through the 1960s and 1970s in numbers of homes and numbers of beds was similar to that of municipal homes. In 1950, there had been thirty-six institutions with accommodation for about 3,000 persons. In 1960, there were sixty institutions containing 4,784 beds. A decade later, in 1970, the institutions numbered eighty-three and the beds numbered 6,700. In the next five years, the rate of increase accelerated, so that there were ninety institutions with over 8,000 places in 1975. The stimulation of financial support and policy encouragement from the Department through the quarter-century had produced a 250 per cent increase in institutions and nearly a 270 per cent increase in accommodation. The improvement in quality of service in terms of specialized care, in physical and psychical environment within the institutions, had been commensurate.

Public and private homes: current conditions

In the quarter-century up to 1975, the municipalities and private charities in conjunction with the Department had carried through a tremendous achievement in homes for the aged development. An excellent, prideworthy network of institutional care had been fostered throughout Ontario. Some 181, well built, almost luxurious, group homes stand in Ontario communities, each a local showplace in civic services. Within them, at the beginning of the 1980 decade, nearly 28,000 aged persons, more than half beyond eighty years of age, received attention and care in an environment expressive of the most up-to-date and benign ideas concerning the quality of group living.

One of the most striking aspects of this development was the rise of ethnic homes. "Nipponia," the first of these, was established in Beamsville in 1958, and the entire phenomenon was later described by Lawrence Crawford in his article "Aging, Ethnicity, and Congregate Shelter in Ontario," in *Multiculturalism* (1980).

This homes for the aged system had not reached final maturity when the development was brought to a halt in 1975. There were waiting lists in 1973 of 3,087 persons for places in municipal homes and of 1,545 for the charitable institutions. At that time, lists were kept up-to-date, because there was a probability of future placement. The primary cause of the stop in construction and expansion was the Provincial Government's financial restraint applied in that year to all capital costs. This, in turn, was due to the general business recession of the time. As a consequence of the economic slow-down, the Government faced, on the one hand, decreasing tax revenue and, on the other, rapidly rising costs due to monetary inflation. Spending had to be curtailed to the limit. As the Deputy Minister, Dorothea Crittenden, wrote at the time, "A Government-wide financial restraint program was announced in April 1975. This Ministry then set about dealing with the inflation caused cost increases, postponing capital projects...." In the event, there were no more capital subsidies approved for enlarged or new homes for the aged (with one or two minor exceptions) for the rest of the 1970s.

Perhaps as a rationale for the reduction of costs, perhaps for more legitimate reasons, the concept of institutional care as applicable to many "target groups" for social service – the retarded, the physically handicapped, the aged – was brought into question. The financial motive was powerful, because care in an institution had become, ostensibly at least, alarmingly expensive. The daily cost per aged person had been less than $2.50 per day in the 1940s. In the 1980s, it was ten times as much, averaging $25 per day. Yet, if one looks at such figures with an analytical eye, discounting forty years of inflation and comparing the quality of service, it is doubtful that there had been any increase in real cost. But the sheer volume of dollars expended, and the fact that Provincial Government participation in costs had risen from 10 per cent to near 80 per cent, seemed to label institutions as the most expensive form of care.

Undoubtedly, a professional aversion, a strong sentiment against the collection of people into large institutional groups, had taken hold in the minds of the current leaders in social-service thinking. Institutional living was widely disapproved as a limiting environment, alienating residents from normal life, reducing the quality of their existence, stultifying development, so that they were condemned to spend their lives far below their potential abilities "in the grey walls of the institutional prison."

Moderate thinkers did not go to the extreme of an absolute condemnation of institutions as a form of social service. The question was and is one of degree of usage. How many of the people to be served could be successfully accommodated "in the community" and for how many is institutional care a practical necessity? The distinction of "practical necessity" is required, because theoretically no one need be placed in an institution if society can afford to bring to the person's private residence all the institutional services, including twenty-four-hour attention. But in social welfare, the matter of public cost must always be balanced against the matter of individual benefit.

In recent years, the weight of opinion has been that there should be the lowest possible degree of usage of the institutional alternative combined with a high optimism that many of the people who are potential or actual residents of institutions can be successfully served at a lower cost "in the community." The meaning of the latter phrase is admittedly ambiguous and seldom designates living in a

normal, private home. With the advent of "group homes," "community residences," and suchlike collectivities, the argument against institutions sometimes seems to devolve into the doubtful contention merely that small institutions in the community meet the total needs of the resident better than big institutions.

Aside from the unpopularity of the institutional method, the home for the aged, in particular, seemed to be one type of institution for which there was a severely decreased need. Other methods of care had become so deeply entrenched in this field that it became questionable whether the home had any ground to stand on. As a residence for the normal care of ambulatory aged person, the home seemed to be in part superceded by public housing projects for the elderly that included a "care package" that would assist enfeebled tenants in daily living. As a facility offering bed care, the home appeared to be outmoded by the Ministry of Health Nursing Home program that began in 1972.

Provincial assistance to indigent or partly indigent patients in private nursing homes had been started by the Department of Public Welfare in 1958 under the General Welfare Assistance Act. This help was so much in demand that provincial and municipal funding augmented a wide expansion of the private nursing home system, until by 1970 there were some 365 nursing homes and 5,424 of their residents were paid for through municipal/provincial allowances. At this point, responsibility for the nursing homes, plainly a health care concern, was transferred gradually to the Ministry of Health. Two years later, that Ministry, under a new Nursing Homes Act, inaugurated a generous program that was a great advantage both to the nursing homes and the residents. Through the Health Ministry, the Province would pay nearly three-quarters of the resident's expense for nursing care, the resident contributing a fixed "co-insurance" fee which was well within the financial capability of Old Age Security Allowances.

This arrangement contrasted sharply with bed care in a home for the aged where the recipient was expected to pay up to the total cost of care if he or she could do so out of resources. The anomaly was rectified by an amendment to the Home for the Aged Act which said in effect that where bed care in a home for the aged was equivalent to care in a nursing home, the resident need only contribute the co-insurance fee, the Province paying the balance. This set up another anomaly in homes for

the aged; all other groups of residents were on the long standing needs-test system. That is, they were required to pay up to the full cost of care, according to financial tests, whereas those who qualified under the co-insurance provision were not needs-tested and paid only a portion of cost. This asymmetry, amounting to injustice, appears in glaring form in the home for the aged where a financial test program is juxtaposed with an insurance type program in the same institution, but it is a typical feature of the Canadian social service scene. The jobless person may draw unemployment insurance without reference to his income or resources, but he is needs-tested if he applies for General Welfare Assistance, though it is not at all evident that he has, in fact, contributed more in tax and premium to one program or the other. The war veteran is needs-tested for his allowance at sixty years of age, but Old Age Security is universal for all citizens at sixty-five. Health programs are insurance plans, but social services are needs-test schemes, even though the taxation that supports both is, for all practical purposes, universal.

The anomaly in homes for the aged has not been fully resolved up to the present, but its effect is mitigated by the ever larger proportion of residents who fall into the nursing care category, which is to be expected as the entrants to homes grow older. The proportion of such cases has led to discussion as to whether provincial responsibilities for homes for the aged should be transferred to the Ministry of Health.

Although in many ways the matter has not often been discussed overtly, the question has also been raised in recent years whether the home for the aged as conceived thirty years ago has any place in the current scheme of things. Have the homes served their historical purpose by implementing a high standard of health and social care for the elderly which can now be better maintained by other agencies? The nursing functon might go to nursing homes, the accommodation, attentive and stimulative functions to such facilities as the specially equipped housing projects, the home-care services, and the social and recreational centres.

On the other side of the argument is the consideration that there may be a significant number of elderly persons who, because of physical or mental enfeeblement, require so much attention that there is a "practical necessity" they be placed in an institutional setting; they cannot be adequately served by the non-continuous attention of home-care visits or a housing project "care package." These are not persons who require bed-side nursing, but they do need on the spot help in many of the routines of daily life. The chances are that there is this narrow but indispensible area of continuing need, and it is in this area that homes for the aged now serve and could serve in larger numbers if they were cleared of the bed-care cases. Since scarcely 4 per cent of people over sixty-five years of age are in municipal and charitable homes for the aged, it is likely that their total accommodation and more could be assigned to this special segment of the population and that the phasing out of homes for the aged or their total conversion to nursing homes would be an error depriving the elderly of an essential type of specialized facility.

Since 1975 the homes for the aged system has not been entirely at a standstill. The pressure of population and need upon a large and still lively program has produced, even in the time of severest restraint, an increase of nearly 2,000 residents in five years, to a total of 27,967 in 1980. The number of homes has risen by one only, a charitable institution, to 181 centres of care.

In March, 1980, the Ministry announced a $40 million allocation of capital, the first break in the restraint program, though this would go chiefly for renovation and repair of buildings, new in the 1950s, but now showing a full generation of wear and tear. Though the days of glorious expansion are, for the present, in the past, this well maintained system of homes for the aged probably has a long and useful future.

Both cultural and social activities are features of the new style home for the aged in Ontario. This picnic was held at Kipling Acres Home for the Aged in 1963. ***(Russell)***

Chapter 9

TWO DECADES OF PROGRESS: 1950-1970

The turn of the decade, 1950, is a convenient if not strictly accurate year from which to date the beginning of a growth of unprecendented proportions in the Department of Public Welfare's functions and programs that extend through a twenty-year period. This was the time of the greening of public social services in Ontario. From the end of the Great Depression and World War II the Department had made improvements, some false starts and some hesitations in administrative plans and legislation. From 1950 to 1969, there was a purposeful and continuous expansion of services within a stable organizational framework.

This was part of a larger movement, an advance, in which the Government of Ontario was responding to a changing society. Yet, in the Department, progress began early and went far, and its particular causes can be summed up in terms of prosperity, personnel and public initiative. The national and provincial economy was growing richer, and this affluence provided the resources for generous and constructive expressions towards the less fortunate. Private charity had long before yielded the main initiative to public welfare, and the three levels of government were ready poised, even competitive, to fulfil this leadership role. They required personnel with the imagination to devise programs and the capability to execute them. Ontario was lucky in this respect, for at this crucial moment the right people and the right circumstances met and the relationship endured.

Three Ministers only held the portfolio of Public Welfare in the two decades. William Goodfellow was replaced in August, 1955, by Louis P. Cecile, who served eleven years, the longest term of any Minister, and he was succeeded on November 24, 1966, by John Yaremko.

The Deputy Minister of Public Welfare for practically the entire period was James S. Band, the guiding spirit of the twenty years of progress. To his continuing inspiration and influence must go much of the credit for the unprecedented achievements of the Department. At the same time, the contributions of each of the three Ministers should be recognized, backed as they were by the humane policies of the government they all served.

James Band had twenty years of experience with the Department behind him when he became Deputy Minister officially on January 22, 1953, though he had been effectively administrative head since at least 1950. He had begun as an inspector of Unemployment Relief in September, 1933, at thirty years of age, after some years of experience in private business in Ottawa and Windsor. In the worst of the Depression, in the most practical way, he learned the limits and opportunities of government welfare development. His work in Unemployment Relief kept him in touch with municipal offices around the province where he became notable as an advisor and promoter of improved administration and new methods of assistance. Several times when bankrupt municipalities came under provincial control, Band was put in direct charge of the local relief issuances. He also served as welfare administrator for municipally unorganized areas of northern Ontario, and on other occasions his reputation as a trouble-shooter involved him in special investigations and reports. By 1940, after six years of invaluable field experience, he became a supervisor and in 1942 Assistant Director of Unemployment Relief. In 1944, when it was no longer considered necessary to designate a Deputy Minister as nominal Director of Unemployment Relief, he was appointed to that position.

William Goodfellow, on becoming Minister in 1946, found the Director of Unemployment Relief congenial to his views and able to supply advice on what to do and how to do it. The Deputy Minister at the time, W.B. Heise, resigned in March, 1952. In the interim, James Band had been successively Executive Assistant, Assistant Deputy Minister, and for three years from 1950 Acting

Deputy Minister, until he was confirmed in that office in January, 1953, a post he held for the extraordinarily long term of seventeen years.

In the fiscal year ending March 31, 1953, the gross expenditures of the Department of Public Welfare approximated $27 million. The staff numbered 403. In 1968-69 gross expenditures were beyond $242 million and staff was 1,302. These figures offer a rough index of the departmental growth in the interval, because monetary inflation averaged less than 2 per cent yearly whereas the budget had grown to nine times the previous sum. The tripling of staff represented a genuine increase in original functions, not, as in the 1970s, simply an accretion by transfer of units from other parts of the government.

This growth was a healthy development of weight and muscle, not bureaucratic corpulence, for year by year the Department took on a heavier and more various workload. The Department in the first years of the 1950s attained a mature form of organization that it maintained for the next twenty years. Its attention was focussed outwards, towards public service, undistracted by the need for internal reorganization.

The commission system, whereby groups of government appointees autonomously managed the important programs, disappeared as a model after 1950, to be replaced by the program director and branch. The new structure was simple and effective. In Queen's Park, a group of branches, each headed by a director, reported to the Deputy Minister. Each major branch administered a distinct program area, and support branches for accounting, personnel, auditing, and similar activities became more common in later years. One branch, Field Services, supervised seventeen regional offices located throughout the province; the field staff, under a regional administrator, carried out functions on behalf of headquarters, providing the personal link with applicants and recipients, with municipalities and private agencies.

Through the two decades, branches emerged or divided accordingly as programs were added or refined, but the basic structure remained stable. Changes in senior staff were relatively few. The director of each branch, who was usually named in the relevant Act as the official responsible for implementing and maintaining legislation, was both administrator and policy leader in the program. In practice during James Band's tenure, he kept the chief initiative and control firmly in his own hands. Policy and project making was, in that regime, very much a "top down" development.

Around the director gathered the branch staff which, in programs of direct administration such as Old Age Assistance, would be comparatively large, up to several hundred persons, while in those of indirect administration, twenty to forty staff was the normal range. This distinction between directly and indirectly supervised service had been characteristic of the Department since its inception. In service delivery that was direct, the Department did not work through agencies or intermediaries but was in immediate contact with the ultimate beneficiaries: they received their applications (as in Mothers' Allowances) through field staff, who decided on eligibility and issued payments. In contrast, indirect administration (as in Homes for the Aged) were autonomous organizations where municipalities, children's aid societies, or charitable agencies were in full charge of service delivery. The Department in this indirect situation exercised a more or less general supervision and provided grants or subsidies to the organization through the relevant branch and legislation.

As the variety and volume of services grew, the Department fostered both direct and indirect administration. The unwritten policies in this regard can be inferred from the practice. Where income maintenance was likely to be short term, as in the case of the unemployed, the administration was left to the municipality. Where the allowance was likely to be long term, a matter of years rather than months, the Department tended to assume direct administration. The succession of new and amended legislation after 1950 shows one category after another of longer term income maintenance transferred from the municipal to the provincial level.

Social services, including institutional care and community or personal attention, followed an opposite policy. The preference was for indirect administration, leaving management with municipalities and charitable agencies, while encouraging them with provincial financial aid. The reasons were, in part, historical. The older institutional services in many cases had been founded by private organizations or local government, and provincial subsidy was a later innovation. Another reason was the incremental method of building the range of programs. If new services were left to the initiatives of municipalities or private groups with an offer of generous but not total financial support,

their implementation would be gradual. This method allowed time for assessment and evaluation and avoided sudden large increases in provincial costs likely to attract attention. Of the many social services introduced in this era, most were indirectly administered, many by municipalities. Frequently, a service like Visiting Nurses, was purchased by local government from another agency, so that the Department's connection with the actual delivery was at third hand. In a few instances, where the Department had a special responsibility or interest, there was direct delivery as in Vocational Rehabilitation, counselling of the Family Benefits case-load and Legal Aid assessment.

Whether the allocation of new services was to direct or indirect administration, the leadership of the Department produced a large and constant growth in both income maintenance and social services. In nineteen years, no Session of the Ontario Legislature went by without the announcement of at least one new project in the Department of Public Welfare, a new Act, an Act amended significantly beyond its former level, or a set of regulations enhancing available benefits. In those years, the bases of the province's public welfare establishment were relaid: the structural framework was erected and furnished with the beneficial features that endure at least into the 1980s and perhaps until the century's end.

This was not a forced development spurred by social unrest or political exigency. Quite the opposite, it arose from a perception of the opportunity for a better future and the existence of available resources, and it was due, perhaps, to the memory of former hard times and a determination to forestall further distress and insecurity. Many of the proposals for change and improvement originated within the Department. The Ontario government was generally amenable, because a remarkable characteristic of the time was that the belief in large developments in social security, related health services, and education existed more fervently on governmental levels than was apparent among the general public.

The public was indulgent, if not indifferent, to the improvement of welfare services. There was enough sporadic unemployment around 1957 and again in 1968 to maintain an interest in social security. In the midst of good times, a population that had lived through the tragic decades of the 1930s and 1940s was unlikely to be unsympathetic to the tribulations of the individual. If there was in the period up to 1966 no popular clamour for welfare safeguards and services, there was no backlash against their proliferation.

Within what might be called "the welfare world" of the specifically interested organizations there was a degree of criticism and an expected amount of lobbying for reform. But in the 1950s and much the 1960s this was comparatively mild. Militancy, "non-negotiable demands," fierce distrust of "the establishment," and near revolutionary ferment of "neglected and exploited minorities" did not appear until near the end of the period and sprang from sources other than the orthodox and professional critics. The ideas that were formulated in response, "the war on poverty," the demogrants, the guaranteed annual income for all were incipient notions in later years.

Why government, from the 1950s onward, was in fact the originating and active centre of re-examination and reformation of social services is beyond the purview of this book; the impetus in Ontario deriving in great part from the Department of Public Welfare has already been noted. Federal National Health and Welfare was also willing to pursue discussions of social security with the provinces that had lapsed after the total breakdown of the post-war conferences.

In the coming years, many of the important advances in the Ontario system came at points where federal and provincial negotiations concluded in agreements that stimulated fresh surges in the flow of benefits to persons in need. The first point was in 1951 when the two levels of government agreed upon a revised and extended system of income maintenance for elderly persons and the blind. Allowances for persons seventy years of age or older were moved to the federal level.

At this time the pattern of "categorical allowances" was established. The government approach was to distinguish a type of person, one usually outside the labour force if not always totally

Despite economic advances, Ontario encountered sporadic bouts of unemployment during the late 1950s.

unemployable, who was stricken with a permanent disability calling for public compassion. For the aged, the blind, the physically or mentally crippled was passed a separate Act or section of an Act authorizing the payment of an allowance to anyone in that group if there was financial need. Need was determined by the means of support (the liquid assets and income) available to the person, and when these fell below a certain level, all or part of the allowance was paid to the individual. Both recipient and government had much the same reasons to favour the separate category approach: the person plainly deserved aid due to a socially respectable misfortune that did not carry the stigma of mere, ordinary poverty. Personal pride and political acceptability coincided in the category; it was perceived as more honourable to receive disability or mothers' allowances than to get "relief." The categorical division of programs, perversely, was never popular with the more theoretical critics who saw virtue in generalization and homogeneity.

Another point of change occurred through the Federal Unemployment Assistance Act of 1956 when unemployed employables once again had to be admitted to the list of those eligible for assistance. The Province took the opportunity to include nursing home care, homes for the aged, transients and visiting homemakers, and nurses services in the cost-sharing agreements, as well as admitting Indian bands and county administrations as administrative units. The last allowance of a definitely categorical type to be introduced was the Widows and Unmarried Women's Assistance of May, 1963.

Following these developments, the tide of expert opinion turned strongly in favour of general, wide ranging allowances that would cover a variety of needs. The legal lines between categories had proved awkward, excluding borderline cases or criss-crossing one another, so that two or three different allowances might be paid into one household. A broader basis for eligibility and a budgetary method of calculation would permit total family circumstances to be considered to yield a fairer allowance than the flat-rate payments of the means test.

The Federal Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) of 1966 incorporated this concept of relative generality, suggesting a single ground of eligibility – financial need – and one method of calculation – the budgetary method comparing needs and income. These ideas were by no means an exclusive Ottawa inspiration. Several years of discussion with the provinces preceded the plan in which Ontario made a large contribution to the final outcome. Each province, to a notable degree, chose its own definition of "a person in need" and thus set the broad boundaries of its programs. The signing of the inter-governmental agreements on CAP launched the Ontario Department of Public Welfare into the greatest writing and rewriting of legislation in its history. During the three years, 1966 to 1968, at least ten acts were written or significantly amended, and there were innumerable adjustments in regulations, policies, and practice.

The trend of these changes was to increase the amounts of allowances paid, to expand the kinds of social services offered, and to provide subsidies for more specialized institutional care. A federal sharing of 50 per cent of costs was now applicable to a wider range of programs; it was open-ended in that there was no limit on the total reimbursements that might be paid to a province for legitimate expenditures. The Department, of course, was limited by what the legislature would approve as a total budget year by year, but provincial and municipal response was generous, and the Department's cost rose from a gross of $115 million in the 1964-65 fiscal year before the innovations to over $242 million four years later when they were in full effect. The display of benefits offered to the public reached a peak of development in the Centennial Year of Confederation, and it was appropriate that the Department changed its name from the outmoded "public welfare" to the Department of Community and Family Services as of March 22, 1967.

Other federal and provincial developments at this time were significant for the Department. Universal medical and hospital insurance was established in Ontario in 1966 with premium-free coverage for persons of low income, thus bringing to an end the Department's unique arrangement with the Ontario Medical Association, and a benefit for thousands of recipients. Dental care became available for mothers and dependent children.

The Canada Pension Plan was introduced in 1965, a federal scheme for insurance of income in old age, disability, or widowhood, financed by compulsory employee-employer contributions. Such

insurance had long been a subject of interest to the Department, where from the beginning never less than two-thirds of the total budget had been laid out in living allowances to people in such circumstances.

Eighteen years have since passed, and the plan must have had some result in lessening the Family Benefits case-load, but so much has changed between 1965 and 1983 in population, money values, and the nature of programs that the effect is incalculable. Certainly the Canada Pension Plan will not eliminate in any foreseeable future the heavy payments of income maintenance still characteristic of the Ministry.

Louis P. Cecile was appointed Minister in August 1955 and served eleven years, the longest term of any Minister. *(Ontario Archives)*

Before the end of the 1960s the program design of social welfare in Ontario had achieved the form it has held into the present decade. Though organization has changed and changed again, and large new areas of responsibility have been added and taken away, the original core of legislation and services as moulded at that time essentially remains. During the 1960s, the areas of responsibility were deliberately divided among the three levels of government and fiscal relationships arranged. This was true for the three board types of program into which social welfare seems almost naturally to divide; income maintenance, institutions and personal and community service.

In income maintenance, the Federal Government assumed major responsibility for the aged in Old Age Security and the Canada Pension Plan and for the unemployed through unemployment insurance. Ontario retained responsibility for all those "unemployable" for a variety of reasons: physical, mental, or familial. Short-term unemployables were delegated to the municipal level, under the General Welfare Assistance Act, and long-term unemployables to the Province under the Family Benefits Act. In the reality of human needs and social eventualities, these divisions are more logical than actual. Some recipients draw allowances from municipalities, as well as unemployables and survivors benefits from Canada Pensions. But the formal or general divisions of income maintenance are understood and accepted between governments and serve as a useful basis for negotiations.

Institutions reached their peak of development during the 1960s, encouraged by new and frequently improved legislation that provided capital grants of up to 50 per cent for buildings and up to 80 per cent of the cost of maintenance subsidies for residents. In those decades, institutions were still looked upon with pride as a permanent and effective means by which a community or an association could provide the best in facilities for a disadvantaged group. There was then, and had been for a long time, a full realization that the institution should not be a place of social isolation, or even of simple residence, but of stimulation and development and, where feasible, of treatment, rehabilitation, and eventual discharge. Homes for the aged tripled in capacity between 1950 and 1970, the quality of residential life was improved beyond measure. Children's institutions grew rapidly in number, transformed from orphanage-type homes into modern treatment and adjustment centres for the troubled and emotionally disturbed. The Homes for Retarded Persons legislation fostered the appearance of small community-oriented residences. There was support for halfway houses for released prisoners and recovering alcoholics, and several communal homes for the more severely physically handicapped were established.

The institutional system over which the Ministry of Community and Social Services continues to have jurisdiction in the 1980s was (except in the field of mental retardation) largely developed before 1970 with ministerial support. It has grown little in the interval due to a change in policy and a conviction that personal attention and treatment outside institutional settings (designated as "attendant" or "community care") are more effective and economical courses of action.

The reforms of income maintenance and the great raising up of institutional buildings strike the eye as impressive achievements as this twenty years of departmental development is traced, but

interspersed with these are other important programs and projects so many and varied as to be beyond easy classification. They might more simply be referred to under the headings "social services" and "community services."

Child welfare is the most venerable example of a social service under departmental jurisdiction, and the two decades of changes and improvement in that area is a story in itself. The same is true for day care for children and, at the other end of the age spectrum, the wide and varied escalation of at-home services and community facilities for the elderly. Vocational rehabilitation is one of the prominent and enduring programs from that era; when various types of rehabilitation were tried with variable success but with an energy and optimism that encouraged experimental projects. It was in that time period that family counselling was recognized as a government-financed and sponsored service, and the Department became deeply involved in the education of social workers and specialist staff. It was then that innovations in service delivery were actually undertaken, such as community service centres (eventually fruitless) and county and district units (totally successful). In that period, too, there were studies and preparations within the Department aimed at going beyond the case by case approach towards the social improvement of entire communities, an effort that could report some positive achievements in the remote settlements of northern Ontario.

Thus, the theme of this review of the 1950-1970 period is that this was the time of greatest positive growth. It was then that the program system of "Community and Social Services" grew into the form that exists today. The burgeoning was in the number of new programs and in the essential transformation of the original services. In terms of higher expenditures and larger case-loads other periods, due to external conditions, can show greater rates of increase. But in this middle period of its history the Department evolved new dimensions of service and broadened the boundaries of the entire field of public social assistance.

Economic prosperity and political interest provided a receptive setting, but the Department was chiefly the source of its own inspiration. Within a stable organization, the senior administrator created a continued volatility of service. The improvements were continuous, incremental, appearing from year to year, but finally comprehensive of most aspects of need. "A patchwork quilt" said one critic, and received the reply, "A happy kind of blanket if it covers all that's needed."

Growth in expenditures was, for a long time, proportional from the $23 million of 1950 to the $101 million of 1964 and due much more to the addition of new programs than to the influx of more indigent persons. After 1965, however, expenditures escalated, more than doubling in five years to $242 million for 1968-69. The reasons are complex, including the costs associated with the Canada Assistance Plan, the higher rate of monetary inflation, and a suddenly augmented and aggressive clientele.

Meanwhile, all that was done during these two decades of greatest activity has not been fully described here, but the following chapters will look at the highlights and trace the main developments.

Visiting homemakers was an important program during the 1960s that led to better care for low-income families and the elderly. ***(City of Toronto Archives)***

Chapter 10

INCOME MAINTENANCE DEVELOPMENTS

The living allowances paid to the poor through the Department were destined for a large expansion in variety and amount from the 1950s onward, but the decade began with a drastic shrinkage. In 1950, the gross expenditures of the Department of Public Welfare were over $57 million and staff numbered 525 persons, shrinking in 1953 to just $27 million with a staff of 403. The reduction was due to the transfer of 94,000 Old Age Pension cases to the federal government that removed over $40 million in cost.

The interest of the Government of Canada in social services had been aroused by unavoidable participation in unemployment relief during the Depression and was stimulated towards long-term planning by the exigencies of war and by the prospect of a return of social difficulties during peacetime. The federal authority was no longer content to share as a silent partner in the large scale expenditures of relief and old age pensions as administered by the provinces. National schemes supported by national taxation were acknowledged on all sides as necessary for the effective prevention of large-scale poverty. During the war and for fifteen years or more after, there was a sufficient feeling of nationality to allow progress in nation-wide programs until another crisis, Quebec Separatism, gave the wolves of division another chance to tear away at the body of the Canadian nation.

The first federal move towards direct national administration of social services was the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1935. Some provinces challenged the step, and it was declared constitutionally beyond federal power in 1937. The Rowell-Sirois Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations was set up in that year to address the issues; the commission produced a report in 1939 that provoked much interest but little agreement; few of the recommendations were implemented. But when war came, the necessity of organizing and deploying the work force under a national employment service with unemployment insurance as a safeguard became evident to the narrowest provincial interests. A constitutional amendment was allowed, and the first permanent Unemployment Insurance Act was passed in 1940.

The federal government maintained its impetus in social services even in the midst of war, and in 1943 the House of Commons Advisory Committee on Post-war Reconstruction produced a report by Leonard Marsh titled "Social Security in Canada." This Marsh Report influenced by the British Beveridge Report of 1942 proposed "a comprehensive set of income security proposals designed to protect national maintenance." Prominent and popular was a plan for family allowances. Although opposed by most provincial governments, the "baby bonus" was implemented federally in July, 1945.

Against this background of unprecedented federal activity in social services, the twenty-three-year-old Old Age Pension program was examined by a Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Old Age Security in 1950. Although the Government had before it such examples as Canadian Unemployment Insurance and the American Social Security Act of 1935, they rejected the compulsory contributory insurance principle for a nearly universal demogrant to persons seventy years of age or older funded out of general taxation. In essence, the means test was simply removed from the Old Age Pension program. This old age security scheme came into effect January 1, 1952, and the 94,000 pensioners were quickly transferred to the federal payroll, though they retained their benefits under the provincial physicians' services plan.

The end of file processing at Queen's Park and of eligibility checking in the field for such a vast case-load meant that a number of clerical and field staff were redundant. But the immediate introduction of the means-tested programs of Old Age Assistance, Blind Persons Allowances, and Disabled Persons Allowances and the expansion of other departmental activities, such as the rising

case-load of Mothers' Allowances, avoided a wholesale reduction in complement. The field staff was reduced from 152 to 129; the office staff by nearly 100, most of those leaving finding placements in other departments.

Several federal-provincial conferences had preceded the agreements signed in 1952 that had discussed an expansion of welfare allowances to the elderly and to other groups. In Ontario, Deputy Minister Band remembered the people who had formed the "irreducible minimum" of unemployable relief recipients during the war. Disability, as well as age, had been a reason they could not be self-supporting even in the best of labour markets. Ontario proposed one comprehensive allowance available to all chronically unemployable and indigent adults. The Federal Government rejected this, retaining age as the criterion for aid in which they would participate.

Conforming to the federal conditions, the Old Age Assistance Program was introduced in Ontario as of January 1, 1952. Persons with twenty years residence in Canada in the age range sixty-five to sixty-nine years were eligible if they passed the means test. The maximum allowance payable was $40 monthly. The recipient could have up to $20 monthly in other income without reduction of the OAA. The allowance costs were shared equally by the two governments, but Ontario bore all administration expenses.

The rush of applicants for Old Age Assistance was astonishing; so was the effectiveness of the Department's response. By the end of the first year, the few score of field workers and clerks, busy at the same time with other work, had managed to investigate and enroll 20,401 recipients of OAA. The influx then slowed to a trickle, and eight years later, in 1960, the case-load was only 22,736. This was about 14 per cent of the total population of those between sixty-five and seventy; prosperous

Ontario having a lower participation rate in this welfare program than the other provinces.

An allowance for indigent blind persons over forty had been associated with Old Age Pensions since 1937. In 1952, the Blind Persons Allowances Act of Ontario established this as a distinct program, and the minimum age was lowered to twenty-one, later (in 1955) to eighteen. The amount payable was $40 monthly and income and assets conditions varied only slightly from OAA. The Federal Government accepted 75 per cent of allowances costs.

The Ontario Minister and Deputy Minister of Public Welfare, Goodfellow and Band, carried on prolonged discussions with their Ottawa counterparts, trying to enlist their support for an allowance to the unemployable disabled. The Ottawa people were obdurate; they warned the Ontario representatives that in the foreseeable future the Federal Government would not participate in such an extension of eligibility, because it could have implications for various categories of unemployable people. The federal acknowledgement of shared responsibility for unemployability due to old age and blindness removed any objection in principle to extension of financial aid to those suffering the same limitation for other reasons.

The Government decided to go ahead without federal aid in order to complete the circle of "categorical allowances" to every category of persons whose personal handicaps prevented them from being self supporting. The Disabled Persons Allowances Act came into effect on July 1, 1952. Any person "totally and permanently disabled" between eighteen and sixty-five not living in an institution was eligible for the $40 monthly after a means test. Ten years residence in Ontario was also a condition. The medical verdict was paramount:

> *The applicant must be permanently disabled in the sense that the disability cannot be corrected within the foreseeable future; and also totally disabled in the sense that, because of the disability, he or she is unable to carry out the ordinary activities of daily living without the assistance of another person.*

Technically, the "employability" of the person was not in question – some few qualified for the allowance, who, despite wheelchairs or crutches, earned a small wage or income – but most were at the extreme range of unemployability.

Ontario's was the first program of Disabled Persons Allowances in Canada. Before the end of the first year, 5,554 persons were accepted, and the case-load grew by about 1,000 annually, until, in 1958, the definition of eligibility was broadened and applied to those in certain institutions, which added 3,000 in one year. By 1960, as an example of the unforseeably fast growth typical of welfare allowances programs, the recipients had more than doubled to 13,307 and the costs, $2.5 million in the first year, were now $8.3 million. The range of disabilities was a paradigm of modern ills. More than 37 per cent were cases of mental disablement, 22 per cent were due to heart trouble, 15 per cent to paralysis, and the remaining 36 per cent to various other physical problems.

Disabled Persons Allowances was one of the first "social" payments that tended to include the more highly paid working-class and middle-class families. This changed general attitudes, for better or worse, rendering the public more receptive to government assistance. Because the means test for DPA applied only to the individual, not to parents, brothers, or sisters, many single persons in relatively affluent family homes began to receive the payment. Not a few curious cases came to light. Particularly the mentally retarded who had been secluded since childhood as a family secret, their existence scarcely suspected by the neighbourhood, were now brought forward to qualify for government aid, and thereafter they enjoyed a brighter life. Severely crippled men and women

One group that benefitted from advances in income maintenance services was the mentally retarded. This young woman participated in a basket-making project in a a sheltered workshop during 1959. *(David Prouix)*

This arthritic young man is learning to type at one of the adult training centres that assisted the disabled during the 1960s and 1970s.

depressed by their total dependence on others often spoke of how this practical social recognition and support gave them a renewed sense of self worth and independence. Certainly DPA was one allowance that added perceptibly to the total sum of human happiness.

After three years, the Federal Government was induced by the program's popularity to accept it for 50/50 cost sharing beginning January 1, 1955, when, following Ontario's lead, the other provinces added Disabled Persons Allowances to their service lists.

In 1950, Mothers' Allowances was a long established program with payments going to 7,304 heads of families, supporting over 15,000 dependents. Annual expenditure was $4.4 million. The case-load had not been so small since 1931. In the full employment market and the prosperity of the war and post-war years, relatively few mothers applied for public assistance and the numbers remained below 8,000 until 1958. The mood in the government and in the Department was hospitable; the door of eligibility was opened wider year by year to admit types of cases formerly excluded. The rewritten Act of 1948 had summarized accumulated amendments. Eligibility was limited to the mother (with at least one child under sixteen) who was a widow, or deserted for one year, or whose husband was permanently unemployable or confined to a hospital-like institution. In 1951, divorced women became eligible; in 1956, a permanently unemployable father could receive the allowance in his own right, and in the same year mothers who had in care children "born out of wedlock" were admitted as were, in 1957, the wives of prisoners who had been six months in jail. The only sizable numbers of indigent mothers still excluded and left to the relief rolls were separated wives where the difficult question was one of social justice; in what conditions should a family, when the parents had voluntarily separated, become a permanent public charge? This was not resolved until 1966, when five years of separation and the inability or unwillingness of the husband to supply support made the case eligible for assistance.

The Mothers' Allowance legislation was re-enacted in 1952, chiefly to legalize a change in administration that had been informally developed through the years. The Mothers' Allowances Commission, the directing and decision-making body of citizen appointees since 1920, was abolished. The commission had long been obsolete; the chairman had been a civil servant since 1944 operating under the direction of the Deputy Minister. A commission of semi-independent outsiders administering a program within a department where a deputy minister controlled budget, staff, and the use and interpretation of legislation was not a workable arrangement; full independence or complete subordination were the only ultimate alternatives. The latter route was chosen; Mothers' Allowance was placed under a director and became another branch in the departmental structure. The Annual Report of 1952-1953 noted that in the Ontario of 1920 the Mothers' Allowances Act was a tentative and experimental step, no one knew the social and financial implications of this kind of aid. As the Act became more comprehensive through amendments, and experience was gained in the consideration of different kinds of cases, it was possible to classify representative types of need. Statistical data were compiled facilitating decisions in individual cases and indicating further necessary amendments. In effect, the discretionary powers of the commission were gradually written into the Act and regulations through this process. It was consistent, therefore, with these changes that the commission would be replaced by a director, and the Act was amended accordingly during the year under review. Edward T. Plant was the first Director of the Mothers' Allowances Branch.

From 1952 to 1957, the Mothers' Allowances case-load declined to 7,418 from the 1952 level of 7,748, though the increases in rates, moving ahead of inflation, added nearly $1 million to costs. A turning point came in 1957, however, that led to even higher case-loads and higher costs. In that year, the Act was rewritten for the third time and emerged as the Mothers' and Dependent Childrens' Allowances Act. There were two new features: the flat-rate allowances were replaced by a budgetary calculation of the amount needed and the authority for approving allowances was decentralized to field offices.

The idea of calculated or budgeted grants in place of a fixed amount for each type of case was gaining in popularity among welfare professionals who had watched the working out of the flat-rate "categorical" allowances. Every recipient of Old Age Security and Old Age Assistance whose means – income and assets – fell below a certain level got the same payment. Far better, it was

thought, to have a needs test where payment would be based on what the person needed, not on what he had.

As experience would show, the method of calculation matters little in welfare allowances, what matters is the sum the government is prepared to spend. The allowance affordable determines both the components of "need" and the calculation's outcome, not as some fondly imagine, the reverse. How could it be otherwise? The allowance must be a sum that will fit into the current pattern of wages and income. The needs calculated cannot be the personal decisions of applicant or assessor; equity and practicality require that each item be based on some average need for some average person, in other words, on a flat rate sum. The needs-test total allowance was little more than a selection of flat rates added together.

But in 1957 and long after, the issuance of allowances on a budgetary basis was hailed as an advance towards a more generous response to a family's requirements. This was not only the intention, it proved to be the actuality. When each individual budget had been calculated, the payment to the average family increased 282 per cent, thanks more to the Department's policy of assigning values to the items approximating market costs than to the method of calculation. In two years from 1957 to 1959, the annual expenditure rose from $7.2 million to $11.0 million, and the case-load also increased by 2,000.

The new Act also launched an experiment in decentralization. Individual case decisions would now be made, not in the branch in Queen's Park as heretofore, but in the seventeen regional offices of the Department. On the spot treatment by regional administrators would speed up decision-making and tailor it more closely to the applicant's circumstances. The budgetary method was comparatively labourious. The more items of need were considered in the budget, the more adjustments had to be made as a family's rent changed, or children graduated to an older category, or fuel cost less or more, or as many other things happened. The budgetary system generated many times the field and clerical work of the flat-rate method. Concentrating this work in the regional office would make it less attentuated and more expeditious.

Each of the nearly 8,000 case files had to be recalculated in detail and by hand – no machinery more intricate than adding machines was available – and assigned to the regional office. "Decision clerks" had to be trained in each location to carry on the calculation of allowances and to compose monthly payrolls upon which the Treasury offices in Toronto mailed out the cheques.

Opinion is mixed as to the success of this early form of decentralization. The director was not always satisfied with the results of the delegation of power to seventeen regional administrators. Preserving uniformity of policy and practice among these field offices was something of a problem, and there was some loss of the economies of large-scale production that a centralized office affords. After five years the arrangement foundered upon what seems a minor difficulty, the supply of decision clerks to the regions. This key staff alone possessed the technical knowledge of budgeting and payroll, but in most offices the workload justified only one clerk, and when that clerk was absent for various reasons the administrative process broke down. On these grounds, an amendment in May, 1964, transferred legal authority from regional administrators to the director and returned the case processing to Toronto. Fifteen years later, decentralization of the allowances program began again. Bolstered by the use of intricate data communication machinery and computerized calculations, it transferred decision-making for a vastly increased case-load, phase by phase, in the period of 1978 to 1982.

In 1963, in accordance with government policy of introducing at least one new program a year, an interesting form of income maintenance appeared as Widows' and Single Women's Allowances. These payments, introduced in an amendment to the Mothers' Allowances Act, were for the benefit of women sixty years of age or more who were in financial need. The sum was equal to Old Age Assistance.

That there was a need for this allowance came out of the recognition of the difficulties of women who had been recipients of Mothers' Allowances for many years, and when their last child reached eighteen, they were left in late middle-age without their familiar means of support and with poor prospects of earning their own living. Untrained and inexperienced in the working world, they could only go from one type of welfare to another. General assistance, "relief" from the municipality, was thought of as humiliating with its frequent eligibility checks and other practices that tended to expose the recipient's dependency to the neighbourhood. The new provincial allowance was a

welcome refuge for such women. Another consideration was the modern tendency of women to outlive men, so that elderly widows became a significant proportion of the population surviving from a generation that had been able to do little to provide for the years of aging.

The Widows' and Single Women's Allowance had the effect of extending Old Age Assistance five years early to the female population. The bias in favour of women was unremarked at that time and was, to a large extent, justifiable because far fewer women had ever had the opportunity of earning a living outside the home. Because the residence requirement was only one year in Ontario, an unpremeditated result was that the allowance became an old age pension for recently immigrated women. The number of immediate applicants was a surprise to the Department; the estimates had been made based on relieving municipalities of some existing cases and in transfers of former Mothers' Allowances recipients. Before the end of the first fiscal year, in March, 1964, there were 6,789 persons on Widows' Allowance, and by 1966, when this program became indistinguishable within the Family Benefits Act, the 9,747 recipients fell only a few hundred below the total number of Mothers' Allowances cases. The eligibility of sixty-year-old needy women was retained under Family Benefits and continued into the 1980 decade.

From the war period to the present day, the Federal Government has continued to be an active, even eager participant in social-service development. The federal and provincial governments appear at times to be competing for leadership in this as in every other phase of Canadian life. In the 1960s, there was a constructive stage of federal-provincial relations sometimes described as cooperative federalism, understood at the time as "a gentleman's agreement that both levels of government would facilitate the other's task, would not attempt to force one level to accept the views of the other, and would undertake to have their legislative bodies pass the necessary legislation embodying the agreements reached at federal-provincial conferences."[1]

The most relevant of these measures to the Department was the Canada Assistance Plan of 1966. The contemporary publicity that glamorized its unveiling caused high excitement in the social services field, particularly among private agencies. But the term "Plan" was a misnomer; this was not a definite action plan to be carried out directly by the Federal Government. Rather, it was essentially an offer by the Federal Government to pay 50 per cent of the cost to a provincial government that might, or might not, launch or maintain particular types of agreed-upon programs. It was truly a half measure. The important half was the provincial decision to implement the projects and match the dollars. In Ontario, as in most provinces, the private social-service groups were largely disappointed, because the Department continued to administer old and new programs directly or to employ municipalities as partners and agents. The importance of the Canada Assistance Plan lay in the fact that a much wider area of services became eligible for federal subsidization which stimulated the Province to begin to promote and provide types of assistance that had not before seemed affordable.

Under this stimulus "special assistance" was added to the general welfare program, so that people in need could receive money to purchase an array of items, including drugs, prosthetics, or travel, transportation, and moving costs. Counselling of various kinds through various agencies and vocational training became available. In addition, most of the established programs, notably Day Nurseries, Rehabilitation Services, Visiting Homemakers and Nurses, and Elderly Persons Centres, were now granted under more generous conditions to larger numbers of people.

All "persons in need or likely to be in need" were eligible for federal-provincial cost-sharing under the Canada Assistance Plan. These terms were rather restrictively defined by needs tests devised and agreed between the governments. The federal interpretation of "people likely to be in need" was for a long time ambiguous but finally was defined to refer only to those whose incomes were in the lowest one-third, effectively barring the general population from access to such social services as family counselling. A sore point was provincial refusal to share in some costs, such as

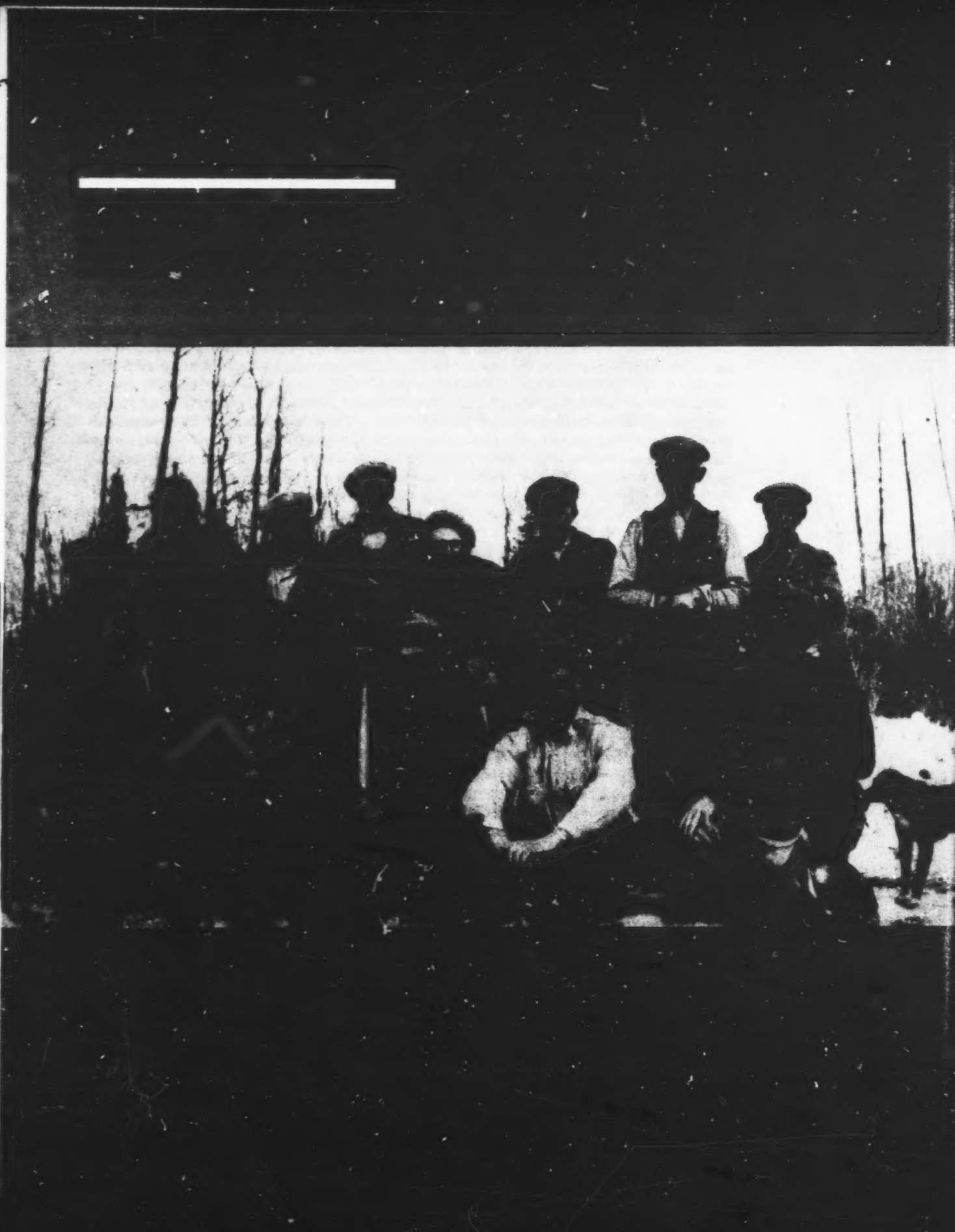
those for "special assistance." Instead of the usual 20-30-50 ratio divided among municipal, provincial, and federal governments, the Province merely passed on to the municipality the federal money. In effect, the sharing was 50 per cent municipal, 50 per cent federal, and the Department, while maintaining middleman control, contribu'ed nothing.

A central feature of the Canada Assistance Plan was its generality. That is, all "persons in need" were eligible; they did not have to exhibit such other criteria as age or disability. The categorical allowances, Old Age Assistance, Blind and Disabled Persons Allowances, and even Mothers' Allowances, could be dissolved into one type of aid.

The Family Benefits Act, effective July 8, 1966, was the immediate response of the Department to the Canada Assistance Plan. All income maintenance issued directly by the Province was gathered into this one piece of legislation. The short-term cases remained under the General Welfare Assistance Act. The distinction between short-term and long-term cases had been, for some years, the rationale of separation between the provincial allowances on one hand and the aid issued by the municipality. Not the actual dur ation of the case made the determination of eligibility for which program but the reasons for the need which forecast the likely duration. Thus, total and permanent disability or old age would, in all probability, mean the balance of a lifetime in the provincial program, whereas poverty due to transitory illness or injury was relieved at the local level. In the new Family Benefits Act eligibility for an allowance continued to be based upon the established reasons: age, disability, or motherhood, but a common needs test was applied and a common scale of allowances issued.

As a result, the term "Mothers' Allowances" disappeared after forty-six years, and the reporting of the numbers and expenditures pertaining to mothers and their children was merged with other income maintenance and obscured by the new classifications adopted. But if we persist in following the definitive characteristic of the old Mothers' Allowances case-load, that it consisted of mothers with dependent children and of dependent children in foster homes, we can discern a remarkable increase in case-load and costs for this group in the years following the 1966 Act. The case-load in March, 1966, was 10,056; in March, 1969, it was 20,428. The costs in 1966 were approximately $16 million, by 1969 they had increased well over 200 per cent to about $40 million.

Contemporary with this upsurge, the job market had declined drastically in 1968 and 1969, but the immediate reason was the sudden increase in deserted and separated women applying for aid. The period of a husband's absence required before the wife became eligible for Mothers' Allowance had been reduced in 1964 to three months, and for the first time in 1966 wives separated from their husbands for at least five years (but not technically deserted since the husband's whereabouts might be known and no charge of desertion laid) became eligible. The result was that in a four-year period up to 1969 some 9,094 deserted and separated women with children applied for and received the allowance. These accounted for most of the 10,372 additional cases that more than doubled the case-load in that brief period. Total costs spiralled up at a greater rate in order to cover not only the abrupt rise in case-loads, but also the necessary increases in rates for all recipients of Family Benefits. These increases were portents of the future. Thereafter, through the 1970s and into the 1980s, the case-load and costs of income maintenance accelerated at a disconcerting pace chased by the twin devils of mounting unemployment and inflation.



Chapter 11

MUNICIPAL SOCIAL SERVICES

In Ontario, "provincial social services," as distinct from federal or private agency programs, are seldom solely provincial. The provincial Ministry's programs are associated or merged so closely with the social services of the municipal governments that a more accurate designation of the system would be "provincial-municipal." Although the activities of all three levels of government, plus those of the charitable agencies, are linked by many lines of finance, legality, and task sharing, none are so closely interwoven as those of the municipal administrations and the Ministry.

Municipal involvement in welfare administration had an independent history many years before the provincial Department came into existence. The local governments had supported children's aid and refuges for the aged and supplied a measure of assistance to the poor since the 19th century. But it was the Great Depression that forced the municipalities into the forefront as the source of relief for large segments of the population. Senior governments watched some municipalities collapse under the load of relief costs and then stepped forward to take over supervision and reconstruction. The municipalities, too, had often been excluded in federal-provincial cost sharing disputes, in a position not unlike that of the oppressed and powerless relief applicants at their doors. A positive result of the ten years of Depression and relief was that on the level of administration the staff of the municipalities and the Department learned to work together, evolved common means and methods, developed shared attitudes and mutual understanding.

From 1940, the municipal welfare administrations evolved of necessity during the 1930s shrank, but did not disappear. A permanent change had been effected, in that local governments had come to accept that at least some welfare services were their responsibility, and most had taken delivery into their own hands. The old system whereby out-of-door relief was farmed out by the city or town to a house of industry or some such private charity was seen no more. The larger municipalities retained a welfare department that issued assistance to the unemployable poor who were ineligible for provincial or federal types of aid. These local departments also dealt with emergency needs and represented the municipality in investigation and payment for the medical treatment and hospitalization of indigents, the burial of indigents, and municipally subsidized children's aid and homes for the aged operations. In 1950, the middle-size municipality might have only one welfare administrator, while in the rural townships and villages, the municipal clerk took care of what aid was dispensed. At this time, out of the 924 Ontario municipalities, 664 or 72 per cent claimed provincial subsidy for aid issued under the Unemployment Relief Act. In comparison with the past era, the total number of recipients in March, 1950, was a small group of 24,224 persons: 4,715 families and 7,125 single individuals, comprising about one half of one per cent of the population.

In 1952, the municipalities were given the authority to issue supplementary aid to those receiving federal Old Age Security, provincial Old Age Assistance, or Blind or Disabled Persons Allowances. This was an additional sum of up to $10 monthly per person to supplement the pensions which, at that time, were $40 monthly. The provincial strategy was to force the Federal Government to add the universal increase. Ontario would pay its share of 50 per cent but refused to assist the Federal Government by an increase borne totally by the Province. As an interim measure, the Province would pay 50 per cent of limited supplementary aid issued by municipalities to the most needy cases. In 1956, the maximum was raised to $20 per month. The provincial subsidy became 60 per cent and within a year 80 per cent. In 1957, only 4,700 persons were receiving this additional amount (averaging $12.81), out of a potential number of 112,000 low-income pensioners.

Towards the end of 1957, municipal offices began to be visited in large numbers by a class of supplicant they had not encountered in force for the past fifteen years, the unemployed employable, the head of a family or single person able and willing to work who could not find a job and whose

unemployment insurance payments had been exhausted or were unobtainable. The post-war full employment prosperity had suddenly declined, in what fortunately turned out to be a short-term fluctuation. Governments felt dissillusioned when they discovered that the long established Unemployment Insurance scheme failed to support a substantial proportion of the unemployed. Relief payments once again were brought in as a program for workless people, and Ontario's Unemployment Relief Act, which for years had provided no relief for unemployment, reverted to its original purpose.

On the federal side, the Unemployment Assistance Act was rushed through and an agreement signed with Ontario to take effect January 1, 1958. From that date, the able-bodied unemployed were once again eligible for a living allowance from municipalities. The Federal Government contributed 50 per cent, the Province 30 per cent, to the 80 per cent reimbursement of municipal payments.

The Ontario Department of Public Welfare, expressing an initiative and energy characteristic of it at the time, took the opportunity to draw up comprehensive new legislation covering its income maintenance relationships with municipalities. This was the General Welfare Assistance Act of 1958. This new legislation retained the basic virtue of the superseded Unemployment Relief Act, insofar as it was a program of first and last resort where a head of a family or an individual could, without delay, begin to draw a living allowance when he or she was not eligible for sufficient or prompt aid from other sources. It meant that no one in Ontario who asked and who used the help given with a minimum of prudence experienced for a single day the hardships of destitution—poverty, no doubt, but not absolute want.

The eligibility of the employable applicant that had lapsed in 1941 was restored, and this group received the same rates of assistance as those others who, for a variety of reasons, were deemed unemployable. The rights of recent immigrants to "general assistance" (which now replaced the term "relief") was affirmed. This had been a sore spot between the governments at Ottawa and Toronto. The Federal Government was responsible for immigration and supposedly obliged to ensure that immigrants had work available or would be supported by the family or friends who had officially sponsored them. Many immigrants, less than a year in Canada, had lost their jobs in the recession, and sponsorship turned out not to be a legally effective force; sponsors ignored with impunity their supposed responsibilities. In these cases, the desperate immigrant turned to municipal welfare and usually was assisted, though official protests were lodged with the federal authorities. Under the new arrangements, with the Federal Government bearing half of all allowance costs, the Province and the municipalities agreed to assist those immigrants less than twelve months in Canada on the same basis as long-term immigrants and citizens.

A further extension of assistance to a group hitherto excluded turned out to be of extraordinary importance in future years. Many people were in permanent care in privately owned nursing homes, people whose state of illness fell between the acute stage that called for hospital treatment and the stable and relatively common disabilities that could be handled in homes for the aged. The number of private nursing homes and the size of their population were unknown, for they were unregulated and generally considered more or less as commercial rooming houses of a peculiar type. As was later discovered when the general assistance program instituted registration and inspection, there were over 500 places calling themselves nursing homes with thousands of patients.

Many of these establishments would accept bedridden people for $100 per month, a charge not exorbitant but difficult to meet for the average family and beyond the range of pensioners receiving only $40 monthly. The municipalities were aware of local instances where elderly citizens and others requiring nursing were in financial distress.

Effective April 1, 1958, regulations were established under the General Welfare Assistance Act whereby Ontario would pay 80 per cent of the cost of nursing home care which did not exceed $100 per month. The nursing home had to be licensed as such by the municipality and conform in stand-

The 1970s was a period of intense local interest in social issues. This concerned child participated in a demonstration for the building of neighbourhood houses in Toronto. ***(Kennedy)***

ards and safety to local by-laws. The resident was eligible for subsidy if found to be "a person in need" according to a financial test. Three years after the subsidy program was introduced, over 1,000 people were being supported by provincial-municipal funds in nursing homes and the number grew to an eventual total of 5,424 in December, 1970. Begun at the initiative of the Department and its municipal partners, the nursing home program burgeoned into one of the largest systems of institutional health care in Ontario. The growth obviously sprang from a great social need and has provided facilities to ease the sufferings of thousands.

Inspections by departmental staff and local medical officers after 1959 revealed that not all nursing homes were maintaining an acceptable level of care. Operators and residents sometimes could not afford the physical and medical environment that a comfortable, affluent mid-century Ontario had come to expect. The nursing homes were essentially a medical, rather than a welfare concern, and fundamental improvement had [illegible] from that field. In 1970, nursing homes were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Minis[illegible] Health. The Ministry ensured that higher standards were required, much higher costs were accepted and funded in association with public hospital insurance, and the transformed nursing home program of today emerged. The original perception of need, and the response of provincial and municipal welfare authorities, had had a large and salutory effect on the public health scene.

Two other innovations of the General Welfare Assistance Act of 1958 were to be beneficial in the long term: the granting of authority to Indian band councils to administer municipal-type welfare services and the extension of the same authority to county councils.

The relationships of the Department with the native people through the years deserves a separate review, but here we may consider the specific implications of the 1958 legislation. In accord with the British North American Act, which placed the locus of Indian Affairs with the Federal Government, the welfare legislation of the Province had not applied to Indians living on reserves. This had been changed by the Ontario Indian Welfare Services Act of 1955 whereby the Province undertook to pay Old Age Assistance, Mothers' Allowances, and similar benefits to individual Indians on a par with other citizens. Aside from this, Indians who did not qualify for such allowances were still required to apply to the federally appointed Indian agent who, by long established practice, issued assistance analogous to municipal relief.

The novelty in the General Welfare Assistance Act of 1958 was that it offered to treat Indian band councils the same as municipal councils; larger bands were eventually able to expand their delivery of social services into such areas as day nurseries and homes for the aged. The band could appoint its own welfare administrator, and the Province would pay the band the same 80 per cent subsidy as to the municipality. The balance would come from band funds, though often Federal Government coffers were the ultimate source for most of the assistance paid out by the band, and, indeed, for most of the 80 per cent provincial subsidy. The interesting point was that the Indian band was given the opportunity to administer an important aspect of band affairs, to exercise legal and social judgments and to expend substantial sums of money. The bands responded eagerly and responsibly. The plan was inaugurated April 1, 1960, and within a year thirty bands were administering their own local services. Others elected to enter the process year by year, and eighty-nine of the 110 bands in Ontario were self-administered by 1982. The plan has been creditable to all concerned, and the bands present no more administrative problems than municipalities of comparable size. It has been a valuable exercise in and demonstration of their capacity for self government.

The second innovation in the 1958 Act stated that instead of each municipality in a county administering General Welfare Assistance separately, a common welfare administration might be set up for all the municipalities under the auspices of the county council. A by-law passed by a majority of the municipalities would have the legal effect of requiring all municipal governments in the county to pool their authority and administrative facilities and to pay for the cost of general assistance issued and administration costs in proportion to their property assessment for taxation purposes.

One had to be an optimist to suppose that a township would surrender to a county their control over a sensitive issue like relief, or that wealthier municipalities would share with less prosperous ones and thus rise nobly above the traditional conviction that each parish should look after its own poor. But times had changed; in prosperous urban and rural Ontario public welfare no longer aroused righteous anger or scandalized piety in the citizen's breast. Now it was more of a minor and

embarrassing nuisance to the township clerks who had more exciting work on hand. It was not costly enough to make much difference to the mill rate. There was some resistance to the idea of a "county welfare unit" on the grounds of principle and local independence, but the advantages were manifest to those who were interested.

A county unit admittedly would relieve the small municipality clerks of the perplexities of dealing with the personal problems of their poor neighbours, a shamefaced task to which many felt unequal. Trained welfare workers could be hired who would know the complex of social services and could use these to solve human difficulties. There might even be prospects of money saving as a dozen or more local centres of welfare staff and records were rolled into one and the county learned how to transfer costs and cases to federal and provincial levels. The Province held out the promise that one half the salary and travel costs of full-time staff would be reimbursed. Centralization of other functions such as education, recreation, and engineering in proud new county buildings was in fashion, and there was no reason why welfare should not join the march of progress.

That was the favourable view of some, but not all. There was at first more resistance than acquiesence. Civic pride was strong, as the Provincial Government was to learn some seven years later when it had to create regional governments by legislation, more than once against the will of the majority.

The few staff propagandists from the Department who went out to sell the idea of county units, men like Sydney Asbury and Arnie Nielson, proceeded by persuasion alone, and the wonder was that they succeeded so well. In 1961, Wentworth was the first to form a county welfare unit. It was more than two years later (1964) that Welland County adopted consolidated social services, then Prince Edward County, then Essex. By 1967, seven counties had county social services, by 1969 there were fourteen. Thereafter the counties accepted the new system one or two each year, until by 1977 there were twenty-two, and in 1980, out of a total of forty-two, there were only five counties still retaining what is now the outmoded method of township and village control of municipal social service.

In the meantime, the Department's campaign to form municipal government social service units of an effective and efficient size was extended to the Districts of Northern Ontario. No district-level council or any municipal organization whatever existed analogous to the county council under which district-wide social services could be formed. The Department proceeded to create one; in 1962, the District Welfare Administration Boards Act passed the legislature. It said that if the majority of municipalities in a district indicated by a by-law that they approved the consolidation of munic-

The General Welfare Assistance Act of 1958 treated Indian band councils the same as municipal councils. By 1960, band councils were in a position to plan and deliver their own welfare services. ***(Farrington)***

ipal social services into one district unit, all municipalities were obliged to join. The district welfare unit would be governed by a board of three to five representatives of municipal councils and two people appointed by the Minister.

The formation of district social service units was hard sledding. There were long distances between municipal centres in the north and great disparities in civic wealth. The plan required that welfare costs be shared in proportion to the value of assessment. The prosperous town with full employment built around an operating mine or mill saw small advantage in uniting with a community whose main industry had closed down or with a rural township of declining farms and deserted lumber camps. Municipal costs and resources were in inverse proportions. Where high assessment would imply high contributions, welfare costs were low, and where the welfare case-loads were highest, the municipal ability to pay was at the bottom of the list. Despite this, progress was made, thanks to departmental persistence and the altruism and foresight of key personalities in northern local government. By 1965, Nipissing, Parry Sound, and Sudbury had consolidated district units, to be followed in a year or two by Algoma, Cochrane, and Rainy River, six districts out of ten. The other four held out with an obstinacy that has proved immovable to the present day.

In the meantime, the Government of Ontario had adopted a general plan of municipal unification that assisted and accorded well with the Ministry's county and district welfare units scheme. Regional governments in the Ontario of the 1960s were intended to gather together some of the functions of the constituent municipalities. Administration of social services was one function readily transferred to the upper tier wherever a region was formed. Eleven regions were established by 1980, most of these emcompassing former counties or unions of counties. By 1980, all but a small part of the populated area of Ontario was served by a municipal social service administration formed to cover each of the regions, each city or metropolitan area, each of twenty-two counties, and six northern districts. Few town, village, or single township welfare officers remained.

Broadened jurisdiction and administration by trained full-time social service staff improved the quality and variety of municipal programs. New legislation in 1967 accelerated the progress. The provincial and federal governments had negotiated the Canada Assistance Plan; the upper levels of government wanted to encourage better approaches to the treatment of poverty and other personal disabilities and were willing to provide the money. In Ontario, much of this additional help and inspiration was channelled to the local government by means of a 1967 amendment to the General Welfare Assistance Act and Regulations.

Repayment of municipal expenditures for general assistance and supplementary aid continued at the 80 per cent level established in 1958. But, for the first time, part of the municipal costs of administration were also subsidized. One half the salary and travelling costs of the municipal staff would be compensated, although this applied only to expenditures above and beyond those incurred in the base year of 1964. The intent was to provide an incentive to raise staff quality and numbers to handle an enhanced social service system.

In line with this intention, several new areas of benefit were added to the already extensive list of different forms of aid contained in the General Welfare Assistance Act. A new supplementary aid provision encouraged the municipality to assist any and every low-income family, "welfare case," or pensioner in the community when some relatively costly item was needed. This subsidized aid covered variable items from prescribed drugs, to wheelchairs, from dental care to travel costs, and from nursing home care to burials. Vocational training, professional counselling on marital, child care, or other personal and family problems were included in the package.

From this amendment of 1967, the Act and other related legislation has continued basically unchanged into the 1980s, though there have been adjustments and improvements. But at this point we should note that municipal social services had reached nearly their full development before the 1960s ended.

Ontario, among all the provinces, is nearly alone in the preservation and development of local government involvement. The centralization of control in the federal and provincial capitals in wartime, and the resulting trend to elevate the administration of programs to more universal levels of government, in almost all provinces caused the disappearance of municipal welfare or its survival in

a partial or attenuated form. An incipient trend in the same direction was apparent in Ontario, but in the 1950-1970 period this was arrested and reversed by several countervailing forces.

The first force was the incremental method pursued by the Department of Public Welfare. This method was one of cautious but continued progress, adding program to program, part by part, with calculated, if apparently piecemeal improvement. When placed on the municipal level, programs grew gradually as they were taken up by one municipality after another rather than with the sudden expansion and expense that was typical of services introduced universally on the provincial level. Incremental advance was acceptable in welfare, far more so than dramatic leaps forward. Because the municipal system lent itself to this policy, it was to that system that many of the new services were assigned.

A second reason that local governments retained a large social service role was their reorganization into larger units of a workable size. Constituent municipalities responded to the initiative of the Department and turned over their welfare responsibilities to specialized county, district, and regional administrations.

Less tangible but perhaps more subtly fundamental in preserving municipal social services in Ontario is the third reason, a change in public thinking that occurred in the 1960s. Prior to that, the trend in most aspects of society was towards concentration of facilities and functions. The economies of large scale were important, and size was admired, whether in buildings, cities, automobiles, or organizations. Then came a reaction: in material things toward the diminutive; in society toward the individual, toward the minority, rather than the majority; in government toward localism, to the street or the neighbourhood. The participation of each interested person became an ideal of social action, consultation with the local community a rule, decentralization a goal, dispersion a virtue. Therefore, the removal of local government functions, including social welfare, and centralization on the provincial tier became unthinkable. Thought ran in the opposite direction, towards assigning more control and activity to the local scene.

The larger local social service administrations have been staffed by high-calibre administrators, educated in the ideas and ideals of social service and trained and experienced in their implementation. Municipalities have been generous in the numbers and remuneration of staff assigned to programs of social aid and also in the work space and conditions provided. Some decades ago, the municipal welfare office finally moved up from the basement of the antique municipal hall, its customary location, to the best floors of the new buildings. More important, contemporary elected municipal representatives accept without reserve that they possess a place with other tiers of government in the administration of social programs.

The long and useful cooperation between social welfare in the municipal and provincial spheres in Ontario owes a great deal to the interaction among senior staff on each level. The successive directors of the Unemployment Relief Branch (later the General Welfare Administration Branch), James Band, Arthur Bosanquet, John Anderson, Robena Morris, Cliff Williams, and Domenic Alfieri, have each contributed to effective action and goodwill. But such good attitudes are born and flourish in good organizations; in this respect, the institution is more important in the long term than individual personalities.

Such an institution is the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. This Association has brought together more than two generations of municipal and provincial senior staff in a manner that has minimized friction to the vanishing point and cultivated mutual understanding. This group began as the Ontario Welfare Officers Association in 1950. Its membership has grown from the forty people, more or less, who attended the first annual conference in 1950 to the eight to nine hundred who were members and guests at the 1983 conference. During these years, the association has prompted municipal and provincial administrators to exchange information, discuss mutual problems, and agree upon solutions, and by their agreements exert a strong influence on the legislation and policy governing programs. The association has been zealous in self improvement; in establishing higher and more uniform standards of service, administration and training. Linked to the Association of Ontario Municipalities on one side and to the Ministry of Community and Social Services on

the other, OMSSA has been the key factor in coordinating the efforts of the municipal and provincial spheres of social assistance.

In the period under discussion, the twenty years from 1950 to 1970, the municipalities participated in the unprecedented and unsurpassed progress achieved by the Department of Public Welfare. The municipalities seized opportunity after opportunity as it was offered to them through provincial legislation to introduce new services and to improve the existing ones. Issuing general assistance remained their basic, indispensible function. Fortunately, the economy of the time was generally prosperous, though there were episodes of significant unemployment that strained municipal resources. Emergency hand-outs to transients and their board and lodging in hostels continued to be a necessary and expanding function. General assistance, in its several varieties, living allowances, nursing home payments, hostel accommodations (the old-time "relief" in its new forms), in many respects retained its character as the most trying and controversial of all types of aid.

What we should note particularly about municipalities in mid-century is how far they developed beyond the simple money-giving function to the indigent to extend a variety of services to other groups in their communities. The typical municipal administration became the local source of funding and supply of social services. Social services, that is, in the technical sense of benefits that are not "income maintenance," but that consist of intangibles such as counselling, or in other person to person helping relationships, in the provision of opportunities for rehabilitation, care, self improvement, or better quality of life, or in the fulfillment of needs tailored to individual circumstances. The list of municipally supported social services, chiefly developed in the late 1960s, is a long one, so we can do little more in this space beyond mentioning their titles and intent.

Community services for the elderly first attracted the interest of those early municipal administrations that moved beyond income maintenance. Such services appealed as a concomitant of, or alternative to, municipal support of homes for the aged and nursing homes. Local government first participated in community-based accommodation for low income groups through the Elderly Persons Housing Aid Act when the Department introduced this legislation in 1952. Though public housing soon passed out of the Department's jurisdiction, the municipalities have continued to be extensively involved, and many have taken part in the construction of large-scale subsidized housing projects for those of low income, the elderly and the disabled.

After 1958, the visiting nurses and visiting homemakers program received widespread municipal acceptance, allowing thousands of aged or ill persons to remain and maintain themselves in their own homes. Projects of house repair and maintenance have been established for the same purpose. When provincial legislation offered to share in the costs of elderly persons recreational and community centres and in the other activities of senior citizen's associations, municipal support and sponsorship assured a successful implementation across Ontario.

Municipalities have, of course, been interested in the restoration to independence of apparently able-bodied persons who remain for long periods on general assistance. The 1967 amendments to the General Welfare Assistance Act gave them the opportunity to conduct "work activity projects" consisting of work practice and counselling for those employable recipients who had a poor work record, and through this means hundreds of men were rehabilitated. Many municipalities have been ready to launch other experiments aimed at improving the personal and employment acceptability of chronic dependents on public assistance. The Metropolitan Toronto Social Service Department conducted a school for illiterate adults when the vast and complex educational system did not seem to have a place for this particular group.

The stability and financial independence of the family is another area where municipal social service has an active interest. The Day Nursery and Day Care Program is a large, long-standing, and continually expanding facility. As a help in marital, personal and child care problems, after 1967 the regional, county, and city administrations began to purchase professional counselling services on a notable scale and some went on to establish their own counselling units staffed by professionals.

In urban areas of Ontario, lists of private social agencies fill columns and pages, and there are few that do not benefit from grants, subsidies, purchase of service or some form of practical support from a municipal social service administration. The twenty year period from 1950 to 1970 was for municipalities, as for all of Ontario's social and welfare services, a time of transformation to higher levels of quality, variety and quantity unmatched in the past or in the future.

By the 1960s child welfare in Ontario included provisions for handicapped children, unwed and foster mothers, and children's aid societies. ***(Photos: Proulx, Robertson, Harrison)***

Chapter 12

CHILD WELFARE AND CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

In 1950, the children's aid societies were one of the very few social services in Ontario with a half-century of history behind them. The social life of the province had gone through many convolutions and changes, but the task of rescuing children from neglect and abuse had not changed in its essential necessity and routine. True, the poverty of poor families most likely to come to the attention of child welfare workers was not so desperate; it was not the utter destitution of the 19th century, nor was the abuse and neglect likely to be so prolonged and cruel in the face of exposure to public attention in school and urban neighbourhood. Life in modern Ontario would seldom plumb the depths of misery of the earlier time. There were higher standards even in the mistreatment of children.

The common attitude of parents to children had been growing more kindly and solicitous generation by generation in western society; it had come a long way from the belief that children were mere creatures of nature to be moulded by discipline and inculcated with morality before they became fully human. The stern, even heartless, methods of the 19th century had been leavened by the Romantic idea of infant divinity and innocence and transmuted by recent psychiatric doctrines into the belief that childhood should be an experience of happiness, parental care and tenderness. We accept without question the relatively novel idea that children are humanity in its purest form; and if well nurtured, they are certain to be well developed.

The ways and means employed by children's aid societies reflected the changes in public attitudes and professional doctrines of child care. No longer was it standard practice for the child-care worker to remove the child peremptorily from the hands of every neglectful or abusing parent and transfer it quickly to unfamiliar and prolonged foster care. The methods used in the early years of the century seem to us now a harsh and arbitrary. Often, a city child might find himself or herself in a farm home deep in the rural countryside in an anomalous position between that of a family member and a house servant or field hand.

Long before the 1950s, the policy had evolved of leaving children with the parents wherever possible and where parental attitudes and attentions might improve so that an acceptable family relationship could be preserved. By the 1950s, the number of children thus protected in the home was in the range of 18,000 at any one date, only a thousand less than the number removed and taken into wardship. Foster parents were now seldom rural people who took the children at no cost in return for the help they were expected to provide. Foster parents were usually paid at least for the actual expenses of board, lodging and clothing, and the child led a normal life of play and schooling in a familiar environment. The fact that keeping foster children had become more an act of kindness than a source of profit led to a chronic shortage of foster homes that has continued to hamper the children's aid system without prospect of solution.

Departmental jurisdiction and control over the societies also changed little in nature between 1945, when B. W. Heise had drawn up new regulations and instituted a system of relatively small grants based on performance evaluation, and the new Child Welfare Act that was to appear ten years later. In the interim, the societies were experiencing financial difficulties, or rather the municipal governments now paying three-quarters of the costs of local children's aid were complaining of the ever increasing burden. The legal arrangements were such that a children's aid society presented its bill to the municipality and it was required to pay without any real opportunity to question or control the expenditure.

The provincial contribution was miniscule, about 1 per cent of the total, while revenue from other sources (parents or donations) was also small. In the early days, societies in some localities secured a large part of their funding from private charitable sources, from individual and institutional

gifts and bequests, and from money-raising campaigns. Through the years the private sources of income shrank constantly in proportion to the total costs of children's aid societies.

The Government considered that societies required a stimulus to renew their efforts to raise private funds, and, more sympathetically, it felt that municipalities deserved additional aid in meeting the increased child welfare costs imposed upon them. The result was an amendment to the Children's Protection Act in the spring of 1949. To every dollar raised by a children's aid society from private charity the Province would add a bonus of 25 cents, a provision which did seem to have a stimulating effect on CAS initiative, because the sum of private donations doubled in the next several years, though this source was never again to supply a major proportion of income. In this 1949 amendment, the Province for the first time gave direct financial aid to the municipalities for child welfare costs; the subsidy was 25 per cent of the local government's expenditures for wardship cases. The Province's child welfare expenditures in 1948 had been less than $200,000; in 1950 they grew by $1 million and continued to rise far beyond the former level.

By 1950, the post-war baby boom was in full swing as the Canadian birth rate per thousand rose to one of the highest in the world, rivalling even that of India. The total population of Ontario was growing; it increased 36 per cent in the ten years between 1951 and 1961, from 4.6 million to 6.2 million. The child and youth population soared by 62 per cent, from 1.5 million to 2.4 million persons under nineteen. But there was a notable phenomenon in that the number of children coming to the attention of children's aid societies did not increase in any concomitant ratio. The new multitudes of Ontario children were evidently well treated and well behaved, a happy throng of boys and girls in a prosperous and child-proud society. In the generation before, fully 3 per cent of the child population was at any date a subject of children's aid concern, but in the years after 1950 this proportion was cut nearly in half, only 1.7 per cent or less required such intervention. While the total number of young persons treated by child welfare authorities from 1950 to 1980 increased as a natural consequence of a rapidly growing population, the increase in CAS volume of cases was remarkably small in view of the demographic circumstances. There could be no valid contention that the child welfare system experienced a shock and transformation similar to the Ontario educational system in responding to a yearly increasing flood of children and youth.

Meanwhile, the increase in the costs of CAS was looked upon with puzzled disapproval by the governments responsible for the bill. The rise began in 1944, and over the next decade total CAS expenditures doubled from $2 million to $4 million. This was in "constant dollars," discounting inflation. Since the number of children served had risen only marginally, public authorities developed a critical and questioning attitude to children's aid requests and contentions that persisted through a long future. There seemed to be too many children in care as compared to those in home protection, often the care seemed to be too prolonged, and the rate of return to families or placement in adoption too slow. To investigate these matters the Department set up a committee late in 1952 to bring the Children's Aid Society system under a review which, it was hoped, might discover the causes of the apparent lethargy in service processes and the rising costs and recommend corrective action. Two years later this committee reported that, in its opinion, the societies took too many children into temporary care and wardship who might have been left in their own homes under protective supervision with parental counselling. The committee acknowledged that the societies placed more emphasis than heretofore on the protective method, but an increasing child population subverted the attempt to make an absolute reduction in wardship numbers and costs. The committee's report suggested that specific grants be made by the Province for the protective aspect of services and recommended a consolidation of the legislation.

The work of the committee bore fruit immediately in a new Child Welfare Act passed in the Legislative Session of 1954 and put into effect January 1, 1955. The three former pieces of legislation, the Children's Protection Act, the Adoption Act, and the Children of Unmarried Parents Act, were incorporated into the Bill. Through this Act the Province asserted a firmer control over the operations of children's aid societies, specifying the status of the local director and the board of directors of a society, the administrative structure and the methods of determining costs and financing. A direct provincial grant to the societies was inaugurated for protection work, allowing from $100 to $150 per

month for each staff member engaged in protection aspects. The 25 per cent bonus added to donated funds continued for several years, but in 1956 this was deleted and replaced by a provincial subsidy of 25 per cent of the capital cost of new buildings acquired by children's aid societies.

The 1954 Act also continued the 25 per cent provincial subsidy on child-care costs dispensed by municipalities but raised it to 40 per cent in 1957. In 1965, the Province again raised the subsidy to 60 per cent and in 1970 to 80 per cent.

The new Child Welfare Act also intended to improve adoption procedures. A Committee on Adoption had been working contemporaneously with the broader 1952 Committee on Child Welfare. This second committee recommended that the probationary period during which adopting parents kept selected children be reduced from two years to one. This was incorporated into the 1956 Act, and, in fact, within two years the probationary period was again lowered to six months. A central registry of all adoptable youngsters in all the societies was set up in the Department and a specialist appointed to facilitate the adoptions.

After the landmark legislation of the Child Welfare Act of 1954 and the painstaking refinements to it represented in the amending Acts of the next four years, the three parties involved (the societies, the municipalities, and the Department) hoped for an interval of amicable and satisfactory relations. This was not to be because the critical eye of governmental authorities found no improvement in the cost ratios or quality of CAS services.

From 1955 onward, the societies collectively added $1 million each year to their expenditures, an average increase of 10 per cent. On the other hand, the total number of children given service in wardship or protection moved upward scarcely 1 per cent annually to the end of the decade. Much of the expenditure increase was due to the expansion of Children's Aid staff costs, reflecting not only an increase in numbers, but also a greater proportion of university-trained social workers, commanding higher salaries. The average case-load per worker had been significantly reduced to the comfortable level of fifty.

The defence of the societies was to point to the thronging child population of Ontario, nearly a million more in 1960 than in 1950, and to note a greater instability in family life induced by various indeterminate factors and certainly influenced by the ever spreading custom of mothers taking full-time employment outside the home. The social conditions were accurately depicted, but the inference that these brought a significant increase in sheer numbers of CAS cases was not borne out by the facts. Perhaps more defensible was the contention that the type of child coming into care or protection was different in the 1950s and 1960s. The CAS case child now tended to be older, above rather than below ten years of age, more difficult to handle and to place, often misbehaving or emotionally disturbed, more likely to be a personality problem than the passive tiny victim of former times. Such cases consumed more staff time in consultation with the child, the family and the foster parents.

Orphanages had had their day as the primary method of looking after dispossessed children and the foster home method was proving insufficient in many cases, so that by the 1960s the remedial group home became the focus of hopeful attention. Such treatment centres might rehabilitate those disturbed children with various emotional and behavioural disorders who were now far more of a problem to the children's aid societies than the routine cases where parental inadequacy was the fault.

Most of the old orphanages through the years had converted their simple board and lodging of children into a more or less intensive program of remedial treatment and training for relatively short-term cases. New children's institutions appeared, some of a charitable, some of a profit-making nature, each advocating the efficacy of its own regime, yet differing markedly in everything from the psychiatric and child nurturing theories of its professional staff, the moral and social values to be inculcated through training routines, conduct, and discipline, to the varied techniques of treatment. There were advocates of "permissiveness" and "free expression," and those who promised firm discipline to produce a proper and well behaved personality. In the field of treatment of disturbed children, there was, in fact, no one proven and generally accepted theory and practice with ascertainable and predictable results. The field was vulnerable to charlatans, eccentrics and mere incompetents; fortunately, the good judgment of child-caring agencies kept these to a minimum. Despite the variety of approaches, many children passed through the treatment centres, and there is

no reason to doubt that many benefitted by the experience. The children's aid societies began to place wards in the institutions and became the heaviest purchaser of institutional services.

By May, 1961, the Department decided to launch a review of costs through a Minister's Advisory Committee on Child Welfare, headed by Charles Foster. Though the number of children held in care by the societies had been falling, from a high of 21,000 in December, 1948, to 14,000 in 1960, and though the disposal of permanent cases through adoption was rising year by year, Deputy Minister Band was convinced that the societies were still too much addicted to removing children from parental care, and too reluctant to return their wards to the family or to offer them for adoption. The consequence was a large use of foster homes for the wards, and this system of supposed care was itself proving injurious to the children. Ministry investigators had taken a sampling of such cases, the Deputy Minister noted, and uncovered the disturbing information that these children were subjected to the frightening experience of adjusting to a strange house and parents, not once but multiple times. Band observed:

> *It appears that one out of every three permanent wards can expect to be placed five or more times in the care of various foster homes. Only one in six cases in the review had remained in a single foster home. The treatment of the multitude of social ills which cause children to become in effect the wards of the population at large...is far from an easy task. But it is frightful to consider that when a child is taken into permanent care by society, he may face, if he is not placed on adoption, the deteriorating experience of being moved time and again from one set of foster parents to another.*[1]

The Deputy Minister went on to suggest an alternative course of action, greater use of group homes instead of foster homes as adjustment centres, a suggestion that was potent in its results in the near future. Band wrote:

> *At one period orphanages provided continuing care for such children, but in this process it was gradually realized that too many children were failing to respond to community life and in fact were frequently branded as less desirable children. It is questionable, however, as to whether this incessant shuffling of children in care from one foster home to another is not inflicting greater damage on children. Perhaps we shall be giving recognition to the development of group care facilities on a smaller scale than in the past for certain children who find it difficult to adjust to normal family life.*[2]

These observations were consistent with the reiterated contention of William Bury, Director of Child Welfare, that there was a "hard core" of children and youth who needed attention far beyond ordinary child-raising practices, who could not adjust to family living and must receive extensive institutional care.

All indicators pointed to the need for greater government assistance to and regulation of child-care institutions. There were forty-four non-profit organizations dealing with 2,000 children annually and profit-seeking treatment centres were entering the field. The Department's response was the Children's Institutions Act of 1963. This favoured the charitable corporations by offering a capital grant of $2,500 per bed for new construction and a lesser sum for purchased buildings. The institution would also receive a maintenance subsidy of 50 per cent of the net cost for each child resident, though wards placed for treatment would be paid in full through children's aid societies. The provincial subsidy was raised to 80 per cent of net cost in 1967. The regulations divided children's institutions into three classifications in order to establish what programs of care were expected of them and to allow a commensurate and subsidizable rate of cost. The simplest classification was Schedule 2, the list of group homes expected to provide only board, lodging and supervisory care. The next classification was for maladjusted children, "who have difficulty in adjusting to or benefitting from normal family relationships or in adjusting to or coping with regular community life." The third classification was for those more severely "emotionally disturbed," though not to the extent that they might be declared mentally ill. Physically troubled children and adolescents for the first time had become a group large enough to be recognized as a worrisome social problem.

Although Ontario's child and youth population increased enormously between 1951 and 1961, the number of CAS cases did not grow by the same ratio. This boy, one of the comparatively few CAS wards of 1953, is being examined by a staff doctor. *(McFadden)*

In 1952, these children from the Ontario School for the Blind explored a fire engine in a learning diversification program intended to broaden their experience. *(Fedneuk)*

In 1963 the Department also obtained legislative authority to extend aid to another group of children through the Homes for Retarded Children's Act. This directed funding to those group homes chiefly founded by parents of retarded children who did not wish to send their offspring to large institutions maintained by the Department of Health.

Of a total Ontario population of seven million people, nearly three million were less than nineteen years of age, and such extensions of children's service were the expressions of a society preoccupied, nearly obsessed, with the task of nurturing and providing for children. Children's issues received inordinate attention; the Department was hard pressed to satisfy public expectations, particularly because it shared the doubts about the efficiency and effectiveness of children's aid societies. When the Committee on Child Welfare that had been carrying on a three-year review reported its findings in June, 1964, the Department's response was to draft another Child Welfare Act to take firmer control of the conditions under which societies must operate.

The new Act abandoned the prior method of paying societies different amounts for different functions, such as wardship and protection service. Now a society would be totally reimbursed for the comprehensive treatment of child and family. Strong emphasis was placed on prevention and protection as remedial means and the reduction of removals from the home into wardship. The hope was that professional staff could intervene in incipient problem situations and through guidance, counselling and referrals ameliorate difficulties and strengthen family life. The legislation spelled out the qualifications and functions of the staff to be employed at various levels. Societies now had a wide scope of action and a variety of opportunities for the accomplishment of the goals of child care.

In another respect, a minatory restriction was placed on children's aid societies. From their inception the societies had the legal power of full guardianship over their wards; though subject to court judgments and procedures, in the final disposition of the children in call societies exercised all practical controls as to how long the child was to be held, where it was to be placed, and whether its fate was to be adoption or return to parents. According to the new Act, the societies could hold this power over the child for a temporary period only, up to one year. If the child was to continue in "permanent wardship," he or she would become a "Ward of the Crown." In other words, the Province in the form of the Minister of Public Welfare would have the guardianship of the child.

Supposedly, the Department would now be able to intervene to correct any doubtful handling of cases. The establishment of Crown Wardship at that time seemed to be a significant imposition, but as the future would show it was to be more a symbol of warning, a flag in the wind, than any warrant for provincial action. Only rarely did the Department redirect the disposal of a case.

The Province inserted another element of external control, now requiring that the administration of a society be vested in an executive committee of the board of directors and that four of the nine-person committee be members of municipal council. The municipalities, who paid the larger part of the costs, were now to have a powerful voice in the affairs of the societies.

This Child Welfare Act of 1965 removed most of the remaining pretences that children's aid societies were private, autonomous corporations. The governments accepted the responsibility of total financing. An annual budget in place of a grant system was introduced. At the beginning of each year, a society would estimate the total cost of its proposed activities, and if approved by the municipalities and the Province, the total expenditures would be paid, 60 per cent by the municipalities, 40 per cent by the Province. Five years later, the Province raised its share to 80 per cent, the municipalities covering the balance. The private sources of CAS income dropped to an average of 5 per cent of its revenue.

One humanitarian feature of the legislation was a relief to all concerned, the arrangement for the payment of children's aid services for unmarried mothers. These women, usually young and inexperienced, dismayed by their predicament, were encouraged to come to a society for counselling that would put their problem in perspective and arrange for satisfactory care of mother and child. Financial support was available through the municipal system and in publicly subsidized maternity

homes. Legal arrangements might be made with the putative father through the negotiation of social workers. Finally, the child could be adopted into a carefully selected home or the mother might be guided into some practical course of action for her future well being. The system was kindly and sympathetic in spirit without any hint of moral reprobation.

But there had been one technicality that too frequently destroyed the comfortable confidentiality of the whole proceeding. The expectant mother often left her own community at an early stage hoping to find anonymity in a large city. Unfortunately, the costs of CAS services for any child or adult, which were in whole or in part payable by a municipality, were charged to the municipality of residence. The bill for an unmarried mother in Toronto would eventually wind up as an item of business before the local council in her home town. Gossip, embarrassment, family and neighbourhood difficulties were too often the result. The new Act put an end to these mischances by assuming 100 per cent of the cost for services to unmarried mothers, obviating any further need to refer to the home municipality.

This Child Welfare Act of 1965, with its comprehensive reforms in child service and financing, remains in effect essentially unchanged to the present day. Unhappily, it cannot be said that the closer relations into which it brought CAS, municipality and Ministry opened a future of better cooperation and trust.

To the consternation of Government observers, the years following the 1965 Act brought an accelerated increase in the expenditures of children's aid societies. From a base of $20 million, the total cost began to rise $5 to $6 million annually and so continued until restraints were imposed by the Province in the first years of the 1970 decade. By 1971, the cost was nearly $51 million. The number of children served had risen also from 37,680 in 1965 to 48,557, a modest 29 per cent, but costs had increased 150 per cent.

The huge cost expenditures were going into staff salaries. For many years, the societies had complained of the shortage of qualified personnel. Now, with open access to public money, they began to hire at an astonishing rate. The number of staff increased by no less than 26 per cent in 1966, the first year the new Act came into operation. The next year there was a further 15 per cent addition to the payrolls. The 1,000 people employed by children's aid societies in 1958 had become 2,500 ten years later. The rise in case-loads was not commensurate. In the earlier years, 15,215 children were in wardship and 13,708 in protection, for a total of 28,923. In 1968, the figures were 17,643 wards, 30,823 in protection, and the total was 48,466, a less than 70 per cent increase in children, a 150 per cent increase in staff.

The expostulations and justifications went back and forth between the societies and the financing governments. The Director of Child Welfare in the Department tried to tread a middle ground, presenting the societies' contentions as to the intensified problems of child handling in the social environment of mid-century Ontario, yet constantly expressing governmental expectations of a less costly, more expeditious disposition of cases. Bury resigned in July, 1965, to be replaced as Director of Child Welfare by Betty Graham, who had been Local Director of the York CAS. The new Director found the post equally controversy-ridden and ambiguous.

There was some satisfaction in the statistics showing that, though the number of children in the care of societies was increasing by about 1,000 cases annually, a greater use was being made of protection and nearly two-thirds of the children requiring service were left in their own homes. Also, the number of adoptions was at a record high, 7,157 children in 1968. Much of this was due to the Department's publicity efforts, introducing adoptable children to television audiences on a "Family Finder" program, maintaining a provincial register of available children, and convening conferences of approved parents to prepare them for the adopting experience. The newspaper feature "Today's Child" attracted the most attention. This began in 1964, when Deputy Minister Band approached Andrew MacFarlane, managing editor of the *Toronto Telegram*, to discuss some means of advertising the need of children for new parents. The *Telegram* publisher, John Bassett, was also supportive. The plan was to publish each day the picture of a child with a candid description of his or her nature and personality, not omitting any disadvantages, but emphasizing the need for love and understanding in a permanent home. Some child welfare professionals outside the Department were disapproving of such "marketing of children." At first, only the Toronto, Hamilton and Kenora CAS would provide descriptions of their wards. But the daily newspaper feature, written by reporter Helen Allen,

proved a huge popular success. The column was syndicated and appeared in major newspapers throughout Ontario. Other provinces and American states invited Helen Allen on lecture tours and consultations to share the Ontario experience, resulting in similar newspaper columns across the continent. In Ontario, "Today's Child" was particularly useful in finding homes for older and hard to place children; on several occasions groups of brothers and sisters were adopted together.

Despite these favourable developments, the Department was inclined to believe that few of the innovations or progressive moves were initiated at the local CAS level. The social work practices seemed to instill an excessive caution and fussiness in case handling, an indulgent work regime, and an extravagance in dispensing funds that were now almost totally supplied by government. The outcome was yet another review begun in June, 1969, by the commercial consulting firm of Urwick, Currie and Partners Limited: "A Study of the Managerial Effectiveness of Children's Aid Societies."

The study noted the prevailing problem of relationships and attitudes as the societies strove to preserve their autonomy and the Province demanded greater accountability. The Province was dissatisfied, but the lack of uniform standards by which performance could be measured precluded any clear specification of what was amiss. There was said to be poor coordination and information sharing among societies, so that common problems were not approached in the light of common knowledge. The boards of directors of the societies in many cases were judged to be relatively ineffective and unskilled in policy determination and evaluation of their administrative staff and programs. The staff was not in general judged to be a model of effectiveness and efficiency.

The corrective recommendations were to develop standards and promote meetings among the parties involved, moves not likely to reduce the differences in instilled habits and attitudes. There was no important result from this effort. In the meantime, another Ministry Advisory Committee on Adoption and Foster Care was addressing the service aspects of the societies. This was headed by Dr. Mullins, President of Laurentian University. This group reported in June, 1970. A Ministry publication briefly summed up the findings:

> *The Committee noted a lack of cooperation, communication, and unity of approach among the separate societies. In addition, the provincial Child Welfare Department was not felt to be providing the necessary leadership for efficient local operation of societies, resulting in service disparity throughout the Province.*[3]

Complete centralization, however, was rejected as a solution by the committee, because of the belief that such a structure could lead to impersonal administration and a lack of community interest and assistance. Alternatively, it recommended that services be administered through regional children's services boards responsible to those regional governments which were felt to have adequate size, resources and communities of interest. Though this report produced little action on the part of the Ministry, the idea of local government jurisdiction in child welfare was to surface repeatedly in different contexts.

The newspaper feature "Today's Child," written by Helen Allen, began in 1964 and found homes for children like this young girl. ***(Toronto Telegram)***

Warrendale, a controversial, non-profit children's institution in Toronto, was known for its unorthodox treatment methods and its charismatic director, John Brown. One of the Warrendale staff, Katy Steele, is shown here in 1964, before the institution was taken over by the province. ***(Jim Kennedy)***

Government supported day nurseries, like this one photographed in 1945, began as a war-time measure to increase the female work force.

The federal government withdrew its support for day nurseries at the war's end, but Ontario continued the program under the Day Nurseries Act of 1946. One aim of the Act was to ensure a reasonable standard of care in private child-minding centres of the period, centres such as this one in Toronto's east end.

Chapter 13

DAY NURSERIES

We have already seen how government-supported day nurseries began as a war-time measure to increase the female work force and that when the Federal Government withdrew its financial support at the war's end Ontario continued the program under the Day Nurseries Act of 1946. At this point, the social objectives of the provincial service were unstated. It was clear that one aim was to ensure a reasonable standard of care in the private child-minding centres that were rapidly increasing in number. These were inspected by the staff of the Day Nursery Branch, granted a licence if satisfactory, or closed down if not. Nurseries operated by municipalities that offered either a full-day or a half-day program were also licensed and assisted by a provincial reimbursement of one-half the net cost. Was the object here to promote the better development of underprivileged children, or was it to provide a place where working mothers might leave their offspring and so reduce public support costs for these potential welfare recipients?

The motives appear to have been mixed, but it is probably fair to say that the Day Nurseries Branch placed the emphasis increasingly upon child development. The task of relieving the working mother of child-minding problems would have been a vast and costly one as women entered the work force in accumulating thousands year by year. Some have suggested that not merely the cost, but also the strongly entrenched disapproval of mothers taking employment outside the home prevented the development of any substantial day-care service. It is an issue of constant reference in any account of public day-care service, because even a generation later it is yet to be settled.

In the twenty years from 1946 to 1966, the growth of municipal participation in day nurseries, in contrast to every other social service, was nearly static. There were twenty-eight municipal centres offering day care in 1946; there were twenty-nine in 1962, and the number had crept up to forty-five by mid-decade. This meant that the number of children afforded day-long attention in publicly subsidized nurseries hovered between 1,000 and 2,000. Privately operated unsubsidized day-care centres achieved a better growth rate, from 164 in 1946 to 431 in 1966. The total capacity of public and private day nurseries and day-care centres in Ontario, taking into account both full-day and part-day programs, trebled in twenty years from about 5,000 to 15,000 children. This is far from impressive when we recall that the Ontario population of young people rose in that time from a little over one million to nearly three million and if we reflect that the numbers of women joining the work force annually were numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Obviously, the Day-Care program was of marginal significance; there was a great disparity between potential and actual facilities. We should remember, though, that Ontario did maintain at least this level of service, while, with few exceptions, other provinces and states provided none. For most working mothers, child-minding arrangements remained a private responsibility. Mothers usually left their children with neighbours or relatives. Yet the government must bear some blame or credit, depending on the point of view, for the consequence that parents' cooperatives or profit seeking day-care centres did not appear in large numbers to meet the obvious demand. A nursery operation that limited attendant staff and facilities to bare essentials could be a lucrative business, but the Day Nurseries Act ensured that it was not—the standards were high in terms of staff complement and qualifications, physical environment and child teaching programs. Nurseries that failed to measure up were denied a licence and closed down. In 1968, there were 526 licenced private nurseries, but no fewer than 822 others had opened and closed in the previous two decades. Admittedly, not all disappeared due to government regulation, but it was a large factor in their demise.

The attention of the Day Nurseries Branch and the Department remained focussed upon quality not quantity of nursery care. In the 1950s, lack of staff trained in pre-school education was the chief deficiency, aside from financial discouragement, in improving and multiplying the facilities that

branch staff could accept as worthy of licences. The Branch Director and other departmental staff deserve recognition for the effective part they played in removing this barrier by stimulating education and training. By 1960, the Nursery Education Association of Ontario was a numerous and energetic group of private citizens. The Department supported their efforts and gave a grant to maintain training sessions for candidates and employees in child-care careers. The association and the branch cooperated to create the opportunities that would justify issuing a certificate of competency for child-care positions. In 1966 voluntarily certification began, and it rapidly rose to recognized status because of the prestige and preference accorded to certificate holders by the provincial licensing authorities. Contemporary expansion in educational facilities helped in turning out a larger supply of certifiable people. The Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto conducted a one-year graduate course; Guelph, McMaster and Queen's developed extension studies; Ryerson Institute offered a two-year course, later lengthened to three years. Community colleges followed suit. In consequence, by the middle of the 1960s, no general shortage of qualified staff could be cited as a factor retarding the growth of child day care or pre-school education.

The idea of day care as aimed essentially at the personal and social development of the child led on to the formation of nurseries for boys and girls who had visible handicaps, that is, those with sight, hearing, emotional or intellectual limitations. Native children, too, were deemed to be in need of early childhood attention to enable them to adjust from one cultural milieu to another; this was one of the "community development" projects that were currently popular and had yet to encounter the inflammable differences between "assimilation" and "cultural conservation" protagonists.

By 1965, there were forty-two provincially subsidized day nurseries operated by municipalities, nineteen offering a full-day's care and twenty-three a part-day's care to slightly over 2,000 children. There were 339 privately licensed establishments, and the total number of children served was 14,760.

This modest progress, the advocacy of parental groups and the fresh federal subsidization offered under the Canada Assistance Plan led to a re-enactment of the legislation through the more generous Day Nurseries Act of 1966. In this new Act, the provincial subsidy of net municipal expenditures was raised from 50 per cent to 80 per cent. The opening of additional local government nurseries was encouraged by an 80 per cent payment of renovation costs. Most significant was the provision that municipalities were no longer limited by provincial subsidization being confined to municipally operated centres. The local government could purchase day care from any private operator on behalf of the children of "persons in need" and be reimbursed by the Province at 80 per cent. This potentially enlarged the opportunity for publicly subsidized day care for the mother on welfare or on the verge of welfare who wanted work. Some of the potential was actualized, because the forty-two subsidized nurseries of 1965 climbed to 100 in 1968 and the 2,000 subsidized children became 5,000.

But this was like hoisting a small umbrella to shelter a stadium full of people in a downpour. The disparity between potential demand and supply was great. In any month, the children of recipients of Mothers' Allowances and General Assistance exceeded 100,000, and the children of other mother-led families of low income would undoubtedly have multiplied this total many times.

The social service point of view is simply that in order to encourage low income mother-led families to be self-supporting the day care of their children should be subsidized at a rate commensurate with the mother's ability to pay and that the service should be conveniently available. The level of income to be subsidized is the only uncertainty. Universal day care, on the other hand, means that every family of any income should have access to public day care paid for out of general taxation as in the elementary school system.

The Ministry had hoped in the 1960s that the needs of employed mothers would eventually be solved by day care in the work place, and some efforts were made to persuade employers to arrange such facilities. But, aside from a few instances, there was minimal response. An Interdepartmental Committee on Day Care, convened by the Ontario Department of Labour, recommended in late 1966

a provincial capital subsidy for day nurseries constructed near industrial plants and Canada Manpower Training Centres, but at the time government did not enter into a program for which there was no economic motivation and little impetus from public opinion.

During the same period, mothers who were university students organized cooperatives, and within two years twenty-three nurseries appeared on twelve of the fourteen campuses in Ontario. Day care for infants, that is, children under two years of age, had not previously been licensed, but by 1970 there were thirteen infant nurseries in operation and forty-two within another three years. The parents of handicapped children joined in a general movement to establish day nurseries and to press for government assistance in recognition of the special costs involved in such developmental facilities. A new idea in publicly sponsored child-minding was brought to the arena of political discussion. This was "private day care," the concept of government inspection and, in some cases, subsidization of baby sitting in the private homes of the neighbourhood.

Such new attitudes and pressures made the early 1970s a period of progressive change in the day nurseries field. The volume and variety of day-care services grew substantially, and larger sums of public money were expended.

In 1971, legislation admitted private day care as a subsidizable service. The initiative was left to municipalities to pay in whole or in part for child-minding in private homes on behalf of low-income parents. Three was the maximum number of children to be cared for in the inspected and approved households. By the end of the decade, nine years later, 3,124 children were in municipally subsidized day care across the province.

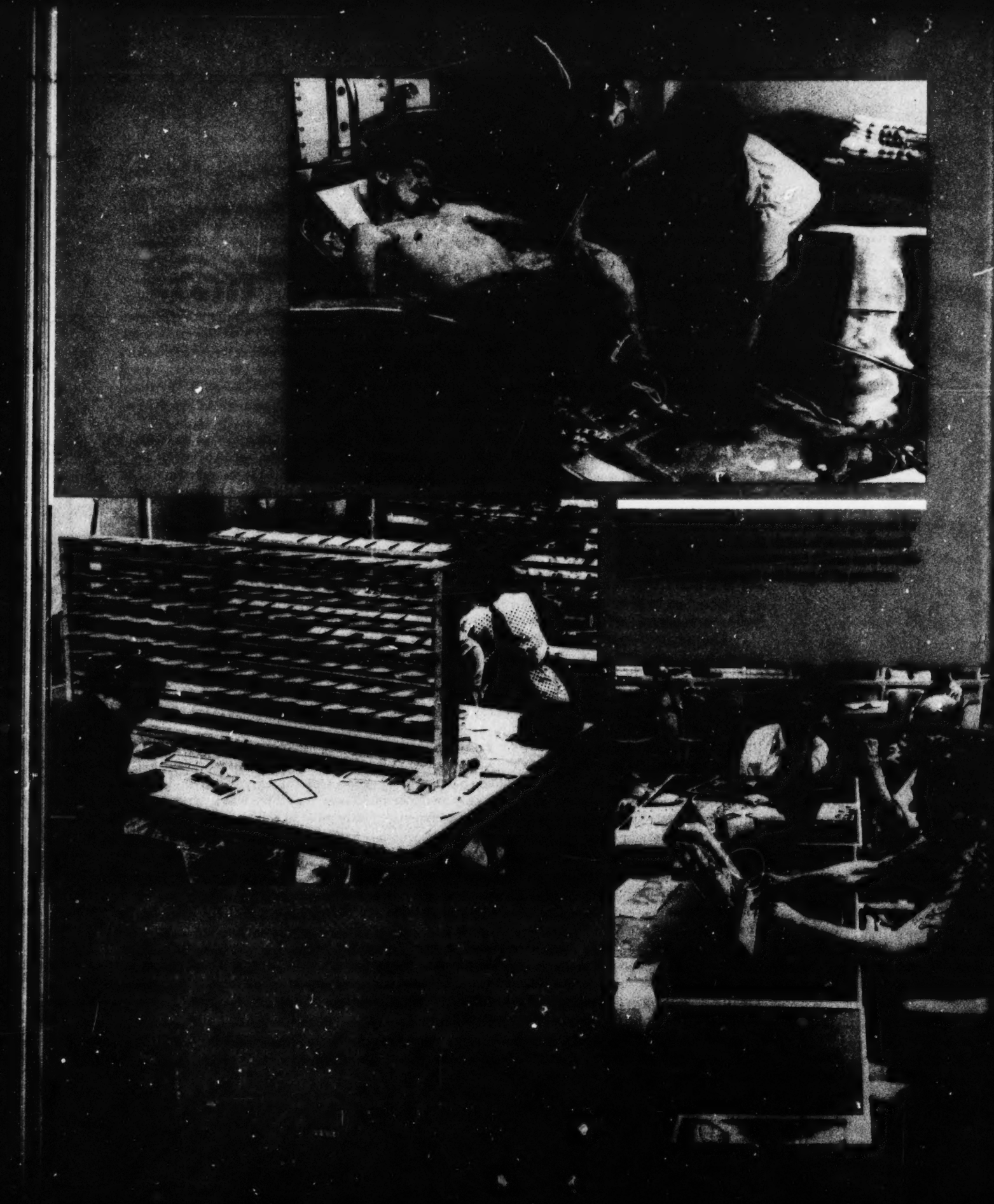
In 1973, a more radical amendment of the Day Nurseries Act for the first time offered direct provincial financing to day-care centres other than those operated or used by municipalities and Indian bands. The Act actually empowered the Minister to approve any type of day nursery for subsidy. In practice, approval was limited to nurseries for the handicapped and to certain ones operated as cooperatives by parents. Commercial nurseries, where vast proliferation would have been the likely consequence, were excluded from public support.

The nurseries for the handicapped, including sixty or more for the mentally retarded, were eligible for 100 per cent provincial payment of costs for boys and girls over five and 87 per cent for younger children. Non-profit parents cooperative nurseries could receive a reimbursement of 80 per cent for the children of any family whose low income designated them as "persons in need." Both types of nursery might also collect 80 per cent reimbursement on the construction, acquisition or equipping of accommodation.

Thus, by 1975, it was legally possible to arrange for subsidized day-nursery care for any low income family. But legality and practicability were some way apart. Such placements must be in a nursery approved by a municipality, an Indian band or the Minister. This was a significant limitation; subsidized day care was not a right and was only an opportunity insofar as there was a nursery within reach and official sanction was given for the expense. The number of children supported by public funds in various nurseries advanced from approximately 6,000 in 1970 to 20,000 in 1980.

This progress, of course, was far from satisfying to the proponents of universal day care. Nor was subsidized day care available in practice to any but a small proportion of the families who could have passed the financial test. Availability depended too much upon a coincidence between the policy of local government in offering a program and a sufficiency of space in convenient locations. The total of lucky participants was fractional.

Even so, the policies of the Ministry after the mid-1960s were of more than negligible benefit in expanding day care and all the more praiseworthy because implemented in a time of overall financial restraint. In fifteen years, the total number of licensed nurseries has risen from the 300 level to 1,500, and their capacity has grown from 10,000 to 62,000 places for children, still a small and select clientele, a service for thousands among millions in 1980.



Chapter 14

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Government-supported vocational rehabilitation first appeared as a significant program in Ontario soon after the passage of the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1914. It was clearly in everyone's interest to revive the earning capacity of the injured workman as soon as possible, and excellent facilities were evolved for the purpose. After the two great wars of the century, medical and vocational rehabilitation was an enormous task for the Federal Government, and it was apparently efficiently accomplished. For crippled civilians and crippled children, on the other hand, the private organizations struggled to meet an extensive need.

Vocational Rehabilitation as a specific program appeared relatively late in the history of Ontario public welfare. During the Second World War the staff of the Unemployment Relief Branch developed a prototype rehabilitation program to deal with the residue of adults remaining on the relief rolls after thousands of others had left for the jobs opening up on every side. These recipients were persuaded to undergo medical assessment, and if they seemed able to succeed in undemanding available jobs, they were placed in them. Through this pressure of helping hands and gentle persuasion, hundreds, if not thousands, of "reliefees" became "war workers" switching from the debit to the credit side of the economic ledger.

At the same time that Department workers became clever in recognizing the potentially employable and stimulating their energies and interests, they also became aware of the plight of those other disabled with little or no potential for earning a livelihood. The Disabled Persons Allowances Act of 1952 was the consequence of this knowledge and sympathy; it provided living allowance for all those beyond hope of self support, but it was introduced by Ontario against considerable opposition and with no federal support. A Rehabilitation Services Act seemed to be the companion-piece to DPA, and within three years the Department found the opportunity to induce the Ontario Government to sponsor such legislation. The inducement, in addition to the humane merits of the case, was federal cost-sharing. The recently passed federal Vocational Training Coordination Act contained a Schedule R that allowed expenditures for the vocational training of disabled persons. The Ontario Welfare Department negotiated an agreement with the Federal Labour Department that ensured matching subsidies for most of the proposed expenditures. With this assurance, the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Act passed the Ontario Legislature and was proclaimed in force August 1, 1955.

The Act, as was stated at the time, "...has the major purpose of developing and restoring the ability of physically and mentally handicapped men and women to productive work." The program was directly managed by the Department; Department staff interviewed all applicants, assessed their capabilities, counselled them as to what training was advisable and arranged with other agencies for the training. At the end of the process, if it was successful, staff also helped place the graduate where a livelihood could be earned, either as a self-employed worker or as an employee. The majority of trainees needed financial help, and sufficient travel and living costs were part of the benefits.

In the first years, 1955 and 1956, Rehabilitation was a unit of the Disabled Persons Allowances Branch under Director Gifford Price and so became part of the Welfare Allowance Branch in the reorganization of 1957.

The potential rather than the expansion of the new program prompted the formation of the separate Rehabilitation Services Branch in 1961, with J.L. Amos as Director. In the preceding five years, the number of applicants had risen from 298 annually to 850, and those graduated successfully from training to jobs reached 240, in addition to another seventy-two placed directly in employment. Within the next five years there were 3,000 applicants yearly, 6,596 in training each year and 735

successful after-training placements. The numbers continued to grow rapidly until the mid-1970 fiscal restraints put brakes on the acceleration.

One of the aims of the program had been to rehabilitate the hundreds of "permanently unemployable" men who were the husbands of Mothers' Allowance recipients. Few of these turned out to be likely prospects because their disabilities were usually chronic and severe. In the first years, there were three main sources of applicants: those recovering from tuberculosis (39 per cent), persons with neuro-psychiatric illness (28 per cent) and those with congenital physical deformities or injured in accidents (23 per cent).

Before the end of the 1960s, tuberculosis had almost disappeared, so that only 1 per cent of the rehabilitated disabled had suffered from that disease. The neurological and neuro-psychiatric cases accounted for 55 per cent of the numbers, these being about equally divided between what might be labelled "the mentally retarded" and "the emotionally disturbed." About the same proportion of the case-load (30 per cent) continued to be the physically handicapped. These changes in clientele required changes in programs.

Rehabilitation Services as a unit and later as a branch worked closely with such long established organizations as the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, the Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society, the Canadian Hearing Society and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. These were primary sources for referrals to the Ontario service for such items as prosthetics and maintenance allowances, as well as resources for rehabilitative training.

A highly relevant development of the 1950s and 1960s was the appearance and growth of new organizations and new rehabilitative facilities in the private field. In most Ontario cities, committees supported by various charitable or municipal funds opened rehabilitation centres which, to some degree, supplanted local Department efforts. The Rehabilitation Foundation for the Disabled, the Jewish Vocational and Child Services, and the Association for the Mentally Retarded were among the newer agencies that became increasingly active province-wide and expressed an intensified interest in and determined effort on behalf of the disabled groups they represented.

The year 1961 marked an important augmentation of the power of the Rehabilitation Services Branch in particular cases. "Remedial and restorative treatment" was added to the functions authorized by a new federal-provincial agreement signed following the passage of the national government's Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act. The medical assessment of applicants had already been a normal procedure, but now practically any medical procedure or device could be authorized to ensure that vocational training was more successful.

At this stage the new branch began to place counselling staff in the seventeen regional welfare offices so that all phases of rehabilitation for local cases could be arranged locally. The yearly growth in the number of applicants and the size of case-loads required an increase in this field staff, and within five years the normal offices included a rehabilitation unit of anywhere from six to twelve counsellors and clerical persons under a supervisor. The branch ideal was to engage graduate social workers and arrange additional instruction in rehabilitation through the University of Toronto. But social work graduates were in short supply in the 1960s, and although in-service training courses were established and full-pay university leave was granted to some employees, the scarcity continued into the next decade. The attempt to shorten the line of applicants awaiting service seemed endless, because the assignment of more staff was merely a signal to referring agencies to add more people to the line-ups.

The seven key factors of Rehabilitation Service were now described by the branch as: 1. Assessment, 2. Medical Restoration, 3. Counselling and Guidance, 4. Vocational Training, 5. Maintenance and Transportation Allowances, 6. Provision of Occupational Tools and 7. Placement in Employment. But there was an eighth dimension of rehabilitation that was rapidly growing to formidable proportions—the sheltered workshop. The sheltered workshop is a special type of office or factory employing people who are not, at the time, capable of fulfilling the work standards of a commercial business, because they are physically or mentally disadvantaged. Such a workshop is not run for profit but aims to earn as much money as feasible. The workers are paid but usually at a rate well below ordinary wages and based upon the financial state of the charitable corporation in

charge. The balance of the workers' living costs are usually met by public welfare allowances and provisions. Often a group residence for the workers, a centre of care for the handicapped, is connected with the workshop.

In the first years of workshop development, the 1950s, the chief aim seemed to be to provide a place of permanent employment where the disadvantaged could add to the quality of life by useful activity and also make a contribution to their own support. In later years, the agencies involved, particularly the Department, began to see the workshop chiefly as a temporary experience, a training ground, whose aim was to prepare people to leave and successfully fill positions in the commercial world.

There has been continuing difficulty in reconciling these two aims. Even if it is conceded that the one workshop can fulfil both functions for different groups, there remains the problem that the best workers are being removed at a rate most productive processes can scarcely endure.

But this difficulty was far in the future when the workshops began to grow in number and take on a more definite character in the 1950s. Such organizations as the Candian Institute for the Blind had for many years operated centres of adjustment and training, and the same charitable services to other types of handicapped people on a small scale were not unusual. But a generation ago the general social growth in prosperity and population and the release of humanitarian energies produced new organizations and renewed efforts among the established agencies in the development of sheltered workshops and other facilities.

The Association for the Mentally Retarded was among the most prominent of the new groups. When the Provincial Rehabilitation Services was set up in 1955, workshops for the mentally retarded were practically non-existent. But ten years later there were forty of them throughout Ontario and the number was increasing by several centres yearly. The Rehabilitation Foundation for the Disabled and independent community committees also became active in this aspect of service.

The Rehabilitation Branch developed close working relationships with the sheltered workshops through the referral system and the purchase of service for the assessment of applicants and the training of accepted clients. The rehabilitative functions and the personal and social value of sheltered workshops were obvious to the Department. So were their financial difficulties; few could hope to be self-supporting and deficits were large. In 1966, the Department came to their aid through a new Vocational Rehabilitation Services Act chiefly re-enacted to authorize grants to the workshops. The provincial grant was $20 per month per worker, plus a capital grant of 25 per cent of cost for new facilities and buildings.

In 1967, the first full year when the grants were paid, there were eighty-seven workshops with 2,372 clients at year's end: the Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded operated fifty-four workshops, the Rehabilitation Foundation for the Disabled twelve workshops, the CNIB nine, the Canadian Mental Health Association had three, and single community groups had established nine. Three years later, by the end of the 1950-1970 period, there were 106 sheltered workshops with 2,845 persons receiving provincial subsidies.

Nevertheless, the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled remained the primary focus of the branch, and the number of persons on training courses during the 1960s increased at a rate of over 1,000 per year. Since many of the courses were several years long, the case-load accumulated, and by 1970 there were 6,352 trainees supported during the year, 956 placed in employment after training, and 590 were helped to secure jobs that year who did not require vocational training. In all, in the fifteen years between 1955 and 1970, an estimated 10,000 disabled persons were accepted for training and about 78 per cent or nearly 8,000 were successfully rehabilitated from dependancy to self-support, while perhaps another 3,000 were similarly placed without the necessity of course work or on-the-job training. The Director estimated that for every dollar spent in rehabilitative efforts the successful graduates earned $2.75 in the first year of self support alone, and their contribution to the provincial economy repaid many times over the cost of rehabilitation, while the addition to human happiness was an incalculable sum.

The services of visiting homemakers have allowed many elderly people to remain in their own homes and avoid institutions. Shown here is the first class of visiting homemakers at the Adult Training Centre in Toronto; the instructor is Freda Graj. *(Bruce Reed)*

Chapter 15

COMMUNITY AND OTHER PROGRAMS FOR THE AGED

In 1954, the introduction to the Department's annual report said: "It has been stated that the first half of the century gave concentrated attention to the young person. Today it is apparent that the latter half will be known as the 'Era of Geriatrics.' " The accuracy of the prediction was postponed by at least one generation, as North Americans produced a large population of young people whose needs and desires were paramount in society at least until the 1970s. But it is true that although "target groups" like the family, children and the handicapped each benefitted greatly from twenty years of improvement within the Department, none received as much co. centrated attention as the aged.

Progress in income maintenance from the narrowness of the Old Age Pensions to the broadening of the Old Age Security scheme and the Canada Pension Plan has already been traced. With federal and Ontario supplements, the CPP appears to have satisfied for the present the income expectations of those over sixty-five. To supply a high level of required institutional care, nearly 500 homes for the aged and nursing homes have been erected across the province. The story would be only half told without a description, however brief, of the other services to the elderly that the Department developed beyond the context of income maintenance and institutions. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Department was a pioneer in providing personal and community aids and benefits, some of which were later transferred to flourish in other departments, some to disappear in the austerity of a later decade and some to remain today as permanent programs.

One of these departmental initiatives was in low rental housing. Publicly subsidized housing, which today is such a common feature of Canadian life, in 1952 was a relatively novel product of the National Housing Act. This federal legislation allowed the government to make loans at low interest rates to non-profit building corporations which, in turn, rented accommodation at less than market value to elderly persons of low income. The mortgage loan covered up to 90 per cent of capital cost; the corporation, usually owned or sponsored by a municipality, had to supply 10 per cent. This meant a substantial outlay for local government, so that despite popular sympathy for the elderly at a time when "old" and "poor" seemed almost synonymous, the construction of subsidized accommodation in Ontario went very slowly.

During this period, the Provincial Government had little or no involvement with public housing, but Public Welfare staff constantly witnessed elderly people's need for good, low rental apartments, because of departmental participation in Old Age Pensions and Homes for the Aged programs. They were concerned that the new model homes be reserved for those who required attendant care, while the healthy, active aged had the facilities to remain outside institutions as long as they were able. Welfare Minister William Goodfellow decided to encourage municipal housing projects with some material assistance. In April, 1952, he presented the Elderly Persons Housing Aid Act to the legislature as a government bill. This authorized an outright grant to any limited dividend housing corporation owned or approved by a municipality. The grant was $500 for each apartment unit of low rental housing for the elderly.

This incentive was at first slow to take effect; in 1957 only 414 units had been established, but there were 1,000 one year later and after that an average of 400 were added every year. The total number benefitting from the grant was 4,034 by 1967, when the legislation and the program were transferred to the Ontario Housing Corporation. There the plan's huge expansion confirmed the validity of its social utility and the foresight of Public Welfare in originating its development fifteen years earlier.

As another means of keeping the elderly in a normal environment, from 1955 onward the Department promoted "Special Home Care." Actual or potential residents of a home for the aged,

who needed some measure of daily personal attention, could be placed in private homes instead of institutions. The Home for the Aged administration would arrange placements, compensate the "foster parents" and supervise the well being of the old people. A plan both humanitarian and economical, foster-home care never attained any large proportions, probably for the same reason that made it necessary in the first place. Few families were willing to welcome old people as members of their households, to undertake the long-term responsibilities and tolerance implied. Five years after inception, there were 141 placements distributed among ten municipalities. A few homes for the aged with devoted efforts and promotional skill did succeed in building up local projects of significant size.

Homemakers and nurses services were the largest and most long lasting of the supportive services to old people in their own homes. The Act was assented to August 1,1958, and the means of implementation were immediately at hand, because there were private agencies well established in the field. There were thirty-two branches of Homemakers Services of the Red Cross and three Visiting Homemaker associations in Ontario. Visiting nursing care had long been supplied by the well known Victorian Order of Nurses and also by the St. Elizabeth Visiting Nurses Association. The Ontario legislation of 1958 was unique in Canada in offering government subsidy to these organizations through the municipalities.

The municipal governments purchased the service from the agencies cited at an agreed rate. Where agency service was unavailable, some municipalities resorted to commercial placement agencies or hired and trained their own staff. The Province for the first ten years shared service costs equally with the municipalities, but as of September 1, 1968, with the Federal Government finally entering into this program, the subsidy rose to 80 per cent.

Nurses and homemakers visited other households in addition to those of elderly people; maintenance of the family home when the mother was ill or absent was one of the primary goals, but thousands of the aged were helped in the program and it was truly, as an early report said, "a workable alternative to hospitalization, foster homes or institutional care."[1]

The chief supervisor and promoter of the program, Doris Moore, explained its advantages to the senior citizen:

> *There are numbers of elderly people who can do many things for themselves and yet are not quite able to cope with the whole responsibility. They are not capable, physically or emotionally, of shouldering the entire load. Yet these same persons with a little homemaker help for a few hours each day or week, can be made practically self sufficient. It is now recognized that if an elderly person can be assisted so that he is able to remain in his own familiar setting, he is a more useful member of society and at the same time a happier individual....*
>
> *Visiting Nurse Service has prevented many elderly and chronically ill persons from having to enter a hospital or nursing home and has enabled others to leave institutions at an earlier date. Increasing numbers of elderly persons have impairments due to cerebrovascular accidents, amputations or fractures of the lower extremities and the like. The visiting nurse has demonstrated by her specialized skill that she can assist the patient to overcome the disability and enable the person to function at a more independent level. Older persons, who in the past would have been sentenced to live out their remaining years in a wheelchair have been returned to a more useful and self sufficient way of life*[2]

The Homemaker program began to deliver a notable volume of service from the first year and within ten years this increased 300 per cent. By 1969, the days of service per year exceeded 50,000 and part time services measured in hours grew from 25,000 to 75,000. The Visiting Nurses program grew also, but more slowly, from 100,000 visits in 1961 to 135,000 in 1969. At this point, the Ontario Department of Health, recognizing the value of such assistance in reducing the time spent in hospitals, by agreement of all parties, began a Home Care program in which the total costs of certain

homemakers and nurses visits were supplied within the purview of hospital insurance and thus without charge to recipient and municipality.

As well as helping the elderly with the necessities of health and housing, the leadership of the Department concerned themselves with the quality of life older people might experience in the community. Senior citizen clubs were forming as one way of alleviating the loneliness and inactivity of retirement. In a little publicized but extensive movement there was soon, chiefly by voluntary effort but with cooperation from local and provincial governments, a senior citizen's club in practically every Ontario community. Club rooms were often offered in civic buildings or in homes for the aged, and in 1962 the Department obtained government authority to assist more substantially in establishing attractive and well equipped premises.

The Elderly Persons Social and Recreational Centres Act was added in 1962 to the long list of departmental legislation. The Province offered to pay 30 per cent of the capital cost of acquiring and equipping these drop-in centres, conditional upon local government also contributing at least 20 per cent. Only a few centres opened under this legislation, because most clubs and associations were already accommodated or felt that the operating costs of a large facility would be beyond their capacity. There were also some intimations that "recreation" was properly under the jurisdiction of other provincial-municipal bodies and was being extensively developed under those auspices. As a consequence, the first legislation was superceded in July, 1966, by the Elderly Persons Centres Act. The capital grant of 30 per cent was still available, and to this was added an offer of operating and maintenance payments which were specified in the regulations as being a maximum of $5,000 yearly for any one centre. Special grants for service facilities and research could also be secured. By 1970, there were nineteen centres approved for these financial benefits.

As the Department continued to promote practical improvements for the aged in income, in institutional care and not least in household and community services, the Deputy Minister also pursued an intense interest in the very fact of human aging. James Band appeared to ponder the questions of why and how human beings grow old and what they imply in personal and social terms. He was an early supporter of the new disciplines of gerontology as a part of sociology and of geriatrics as a branch of medicine. If society was to be characterized in future by a large population of old people, then government should attempt to acquire the knowledge available for an appropriate fulfilment of its responsibilities.

This line of thought led to the establishment in 1957 of a Geriatrics Research Centre funded by the Department and headed by Dr. W.W. Priddle, the departmental consultant on geriatrics, and located in Lambert Lodge, one of the Metropolitan Toronto Homes for the Aged. Another specialist in the field, Dr. C. Keith Stuart, was engaged on a full-time basis to conduct studies, and several other physicians participated. As it was explained at the time, "Research efforts are being directed towards the study and development of methods of preventing deterioration in the aging process, improving the physical and emotional fitness of elderly persons and studies into the causes, prevention and treatment of diseases associated with later years of life."[3]

The Department also made a special grant of $152,000 in 1960 to Toronto Western Hospital for establishing a ward for geriatric patients to facilitate the studies of the research centre. The studies undertaken produced a number of significant papers for the medical journals, though the centre turned more towards research on methods of care in homes for the aged. In concert with home physicians, the study centre formulated general guidelines, procedures and techniques of treatment and restoration for residents. In 1962, for instance, the idea was adopted that each home should have a new type of specialist, designated as "adjuvant," who would concentrate on the rehabilitation of victims of strokes and senility. Courses were held to train adjuvants in therapeutic and other restorative techniques. Within a few years, adjuvants were valued staff members in homes for the aged and through the last twenty years have had remarkable success with hundreds of residents who had seemed to be hoplessly stricken in mind and body.

In 1959, the sociological aspect of aging was under study by a social gerontologist on the departmental staff, Lawrence Crawford. He and the Deputy Minister conceived the farsighted idea of beginning a twenty-year study of what happens to men as they experience life between forty-five and the orthodox retirement age of sixty-five. This remarkable study was completed in 1979 under Lawrence's direction, and it is characteristic of the quality of the Departments efforts in this field.

When thalidomide children like these two girls were born in Ontario during the early 1960s, the Department acted promptly to induce the government to assume a financial obligation for their relief.

Chapter 16

NEW SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

In the two decades of development from 1950 to 1970 the Department was initiating and supporting such a variety of services that all cannot be fitted into general classifications. Some were novel ventures destined for a short life; others established continuing programs.

In the latter half of the 1960s the war on poverty movement had evolved the idea of the value of personal counselling. The prevalent belief was that the problems of the poor were mainly environmental, not deeply subjective in origin, so that competent advice might quickly set the person on the road to a prosperous future. There was a further perceived need for counselling due to the high rate of family breakdown that began to shock the public. Marriage in Ontario had grown as unstable as in the United States. The people of Ontario had been reading for years with remote and superior disapproval that one marriage in three in the United States eventually collapsed. They now woke to the realization that the same rate had arrived in their own province. The notion in this case was that the alarming rate of marriage dissolution was due to personal misunderstandings that could be reconciled with the assistance of family counsellors.

The revision to the General Welfare Assistance legislation of 1967 included a section allowing municipalities to provide counselling for "persons in need or likely to be in need," according to the formula of the Canada Assistance Plan. The terms were not generous; the rate of subsidy was only 50 per cent and limited to the salaries and expenses of the counsellors. But municipalities were hearing requests for help from local family service agencies that had recently appeared, inspired by current hopes and fears about familial needs. Municipal councils were no longer solely manned by the hard-headed merchant of former times who conceived of municipal functions as properly restricted to the physical utilities connected with property. There was a large leavening of academics, professionals, labour representatives and others who displayed "social consciousness." These new council members were convinced that it was the function of government, including local government, to fulfil these needs. Thus, the larger urban municipal councils were inclined to respond to local counselling agencies. Within a few years in more than two dozen municipalities, there were contracts in force to provide counselling to low income families. A few municipalities set up their own offices with professional staff to provide this type of aid.

Matching the same convictions and motives as the municipal people, Department officials, with the universal approval of the politicians, moved to provide counselling to the thousands of families in the Family Benefits case-load.

Family Services counselling

In April, 1968, the Department set up the Family Services Branch with a handful of headquarters staff and the intention to recruit professional social workers to be stationed in each of the seventeen regional offices around the province. The mothers and the unemployable fathers in the Family Benefits case-load were to be the primary target of aid. The social work counsellors would deal with all the worries that might beset these dependent and low income families: difficulties with housing, budgetting, employment, with relations between parents and children, husband and wife or with the larger community. The branch would also assist the municipalities in the development of the local counselling efforts and dealings with private agencies.

Within a year, one or more social workers were placed in the Department's offices in six of the larger cities, and within another twelve months all the field offices had counsellors, though graduate social workers were not always available for northern Ontario positions. There was no lack of cases, and by 1972 some 5,000 families were being counselled yearly. The practitioners found that most of

their activities were in practical advice to clients as to the tasks and attitudes of daily living in a comparatively monotonous and restricted lifestyle, in mediating between the client and debtors and in arranging the gradual clearance of debts.

In 1973, the Family Services Branch changed its name to Social Service Consulting to designate a changed role. The professional family counsellors on staff reported to the administrators of the field office; the branch and the director dropped back to a policy-making, training and consulting role.

At this time, the credit-debt counselling program was brought under the branch. This program was the result of negotiations between the Federal Department of Justice and the Ontario Department of the Attorney General. It was fatally easy in those prosperous times to obtain consumer goods on the instalment plan; the habit of borrowing to buy was universal. A certain percentage of free spenders found themselves committed to regular payments that seemed hopelessly large in view of their income. The resultant social concern elicited a political response, and the credit-debt counselling project was the result. The two governments agreed to pay 60 per cent of the costs of any non-profit agency that would provide advice to debt-harried citizens and help them negotiate practical plans to repay their creditors. The Department of Public Welfare was asked to take on the administration of the program due to its social service orientation and the Department's province-wide system of managerial offices. The Social Service Consulting Branch was the appropriate place for its assignment.

The credit-debt counselling services under the jurisdiction of the field offices have continued to draw subsidy through the Ministry and have become an established feature of the local social service scene.

The thalidomide program

An example of the government's quick response to newly apparent human needs was the small but interesting program created to help families of children deformed by the mother's use of thalidomide. This drug was developed in West Germany and marketed there from 1959 and soon after in other countries, including Canada. It was usually prescribed to ease nausea in pregnant women. By November, 1961, physicians in Germany, the United Kingdom and Japan noted an unusual increase in children born with curiously deformed limbs; typically the arms and legs were like the flippers of a seal. Nearly 6,000 such children were born in Germany, 700 in Japan and 342 in Great Britain.

The United States was saved from this shocking consequence (except in ten cases) by the firm refusal of Dr. Frances Oldham Kelsey of the Federal Drug Administration to approve the marketing of the drug prior to further testing. She resisted all pressures, and subsequently, when the horrifying effects of thalidomide became apparent, she was given the nation's highest federal award for distinguished civilian service.

Unfortunately there was no Doctor Kelsey in Ottawa, but the distribution and use of thalidomide was of short duration in Canada before the worldwide alarm warned of its appalling dangers.

In early 1962, several Ontario births exhibited the characteristic deformities that were traceable to administration of the drug under its commercial label Kevadon. Children deprived of normal arms or legs or both would obviously be a great care and expense to their parents, and the Government could at least ease their burden financially. Though drug control was a federal responsibility, Ontario, through Public Welfare, took the initiative. An Order-in-Council authorized the payment of a variable but continuing allowance to parents with thalidomide children. By June, 1963, five children in three Ontario families were receiving this special financial aid from the Department. More cases were located in the next three years, and the total eventually reached twenty-one children in eighteen families. The allowances paid were not large, averaging $700 per child yearly, but considering the purchasing power of that amount in the 1960s, it was a substantial supplement to the special public health and educational aid eventually given to the children.

In 1967 the program was authorized as a permanent payment until the victims reached eighteen, and it was brought under the Family Benefits Act. At age eighteen, there would be eligibility for the normal allowance to disabled persons on a needs-test basis, though most of the families eventually won large damage settlements from the drug companies involved.

Thus, the prompt and practical action of the Department of Public Welfare had induced the government to assume an obligation for relief of citizens suffering an undeserved misfortune

Chapter 17

INITIATIVES

In Ontario, social assistance in its various forms had been developing through the 19th and well into the 20th century before professional social workers appeared on the scene. The Department of Social Service was not established at the University of Toronto until 1914, and the first diploma graduates emerged the next year. The degrees of Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work were first granted in 1947 at Toronto, and at about the same time St. Patrick's College School of Social Welfare in Ottawa became a second source of graduate social workers.

In the 1920s it had seemed that government would be a chief employer of the diploma graduates. The City of Toronto hired a group as counsellors prior to 1929, and the Mothers' Allowance Commission of the province claimed to employ "a staff of trained social workers as investigators" through the 1920s. Public Welfare became for that time an income maintenance system issuing living allowances in the form of relief. With the resources available it was possible to deal with poverty only in the most direct and objective fashion.

A few of the earliest staff of the Department of Public Welfare were university educated in social work, but the Department chiefly had to rely upon internal instruction to train staff for field contact with clients and advisory or inspectional functions directed toward agencies and municipalities. The School of Social Work turned out only a dozen or so graduates annually.

Within a year of James Band becoming Deputy Minister financial aid began to flow from the Department to the schools of social work. The Toronto School received an annual grant of $10,000 from 1952 that continued until 1970. St. Patrick's College received $3,000 in 1953, raised to $10,000 in 1955; from 1960 onwards a further $10,000 was added for the St. Patrick's building fund. The few social workers attracted into public service obtained influential posts in the Department. After 1950, the hiring policy was diversified, and university graduates in social philosophy, sociology, political science, economics, business and the humanities joined the expanding staff.

In 1954, the Department introduced qualifying examinations for applicants and established a permanent six-week training course that gave field workers a thorough grounding in legislation, procedures and practical treatment of applicants and case-loads. But the number of professional social workers or persons trained in subjects relevant to public assistance and public social services was small in comparison to the increased need.

In the 1960 annual report, the Deputy Minister wrote:

> *A determined drive is under way from several sources to increase and develop educational measures to cope with changing social conditions. Schools of social work are given every encouragement in adding to the available number of professionally trained graduates. The shortages in this profession are more notable than in any other.*
>
> *The Department of Public Welfare has recently established an Advisory Council for Public Welfare Training under the chairmanship of Professor Charles E. Hendry, Director of the School of Social Work of the University of Toronto. This Council will serve to assist in recruiting persons for professional training, as well as other suitable individuals, to fulfil the needs of the public welfare services.*

This powerful and effective council included Father Swithin Bowers, the Director of the St. Patrick's School; Mrs. Robena Morris, Commissioner of Public Welfare for the City of Toronto; Miss Bessie Touzel, Head of the Ontario Welfare Council; Mr. Stuart Legge, representing private industry; as well as the Deputy Minister. The council conducted an advertising campaign among undergraduates with the result that applications to enter the profession immediately increased: in 1961 graduates

of the Toronto School exceeded 100 for the first time in fifty years. Intensive negotiations with the Department of National Health and Welfare culminated in 1961 in a National Welfare Grants program in which Ontario and the Federal Government offered financial help to students in social work. Bursaries were paid to selected students sufficient to maintain them during the years in graduate school. For each year of support, the student promised to accept at least one year of employment in some part of the provincial-municipal social service system. Up to eighty-five bursaries a year were offered and all were taken up by students. In addition, the Department of Public Welfare gave educational leave with full salary to suitable employees to attend a school of social work or a community college course in social welfare. Ten to twenty staff members annually took advantage of these generous provisions.

The bursaries and educational leave were first implemented in the Deputy Minister's Office in 1961. Five years later, these benefits were transferred to the newly formed Training and Development Branch, under Director Harry Willems, together with the in-service training of departmental staff that had been continuing from the early 1950s.

Among the remarkable accomplishments of the Department's Advisory Council on Public Welfare Training was the promotion of the new vocation of social welfare worker at a different level than the professional social worker. The committee early recognized that, while professionals were indispensable in both the private and public service spheres, they should be supplemented by another type of colleague who required less academic background and focussed on the more objective, more technical tasks in the administrative and supervisory delivery of general programs. The committee initiated discussions with the Ryerson Institute of Technology, received an enthusiastic response and, in coordination with other departments in the Ontario Government and the schools of social work, a new type of vocational training in social service was planned.

The first course, two years in length, began at Ryerson in September, 1964, with twenty-four students enrolled, seventeen of them receiving departmental bursaries. The Department and the council kept in close touch in an advisory and assisting capacity. Employees of the Department and of municipalities were given educational leave to attend, and field placement training was provided. Meanwhile, the Government of Ontario was fostering a province-wide system of colleges of applied arts and technology, familiarly known as community colleges. One after another these colleges added certificate courses in social welfare to their curricula that were designed to prepare the graduate for a career in social and welfare services. The result was encouraging, and according to the Director of the Toronto School of Social Work in his 1962 annual report:

> *The attack on personnel problems in the welfare field has been...vigorous at the provincial level. The Government of Ontario has given the two graduate professional schools of social work within its jurisdiction genuine support and valued encouragement. In some respects, this continuing collaboration is unique in North America.*

As a result of these initiatives and in a comparatively short time, seven years at most, the chronic shortage of professional social workers and other academically trained social services staff was overcome. Before 1969, the vast expansion of universities had added three university schools of social work to the original two, and community college courses grew in numbers and volume. As in the other professions and vocations where accommodation was made for the populous generation of youth that stage by stage engulfed the educational system through three decades, the supply eventually matched and even exceeded the demand. The proliferation of social services in the later 1960s was well staffed by qualified graduates. The early enterprise of the Department, with the eager cooperation of the universities and colleges, provided a stimulus whose successful development was unforeseen in scope.

Two initiatives taken by the Department that were of real benefit to Ontario were in legal aid assessment and in improving relations with the province's native people. ***(McFadden)***

Legal Aid Assessment

In any comprehensive account of Departmental services, the sheer size of the Legal Aid Assessment function demands a description. The payment by Government of all or part of the cost of lawyers' fees and charges is undoubtedly a help to low-income people who otherwise could not afford legal action when they believe themselves unjustly treated or accused. Some agency must decide, according to the regulations, whether an applicant's financial circumstances are sufficiently meagre to qualify him or her fully or partially for publicly paid legal aid. This assessment task was given to the Department of Public Welfare in view of the Department's long experience in needs-testing and its province-wide staff organization.

The Ontario Legal Aid Act was passed on July 8, 1966, and was primarily within the jurisdiction of the Attorney General. The Public Welfare Department was assigned the responsibility to needs-test persons referred by local legal aid directors and then make recommendations concerning the applicant's ability to pay no part, some part or all of the necessary legal costs. The process began March 29, 1967, and in the first year 51,169 persons were referred to the Department. This meant a huge increase in the volume of work of the Regional Offices of the Field Services Branch, and it coincided with the introduction of the Family Benefits legislation which added another heavy load. It was necessary to recruit, train and integrate over 100 new staff into the branch before the end of 1967, and others were required in subsequent years.

Due to the volume of the program and the need for consistency in policy and procedures, it was decided to form a separate Legal Aid Assessment Branch under Director Russ Dignam. This came into operation April 1, 1968. Field workers in regional offices engaged wholly in legal aid assessment were considered to be staff of the new branch; but much staff work was shared between the Legal Aid Assessment and the Field Services Branch.

In 1968, there were 53,559 persons referred for legal aid assessment, and 77 per cent were recommended by departmental staff as eligible for full or partial payment, which is not surprising because over 60 per cent were unemployed. The number of referrals continued to grow from year to year, and the Department was hard pressed to secure sufficient staff to carry out the somewhat dull and thankless task of financial testing. The duty remains with the Ministry of Community and Social Services in the 1980 decade, although the Legal Aid Assessment Branch as a headquarters unit did not survive the first reorganizations of the 1970s.

Relations to Indians

Through most of the 1950-1970 period, the Department had close and interesting relationships with the descendants of Ontario's native people,an association that began in good will and produced many permanent benefits.

For a hundred years up to 1950, native people were of little concern to social services in the provinces. Any social-service needs they had were supposedly taken care of by the Federal Government which, under the British North America Act, clearly retained responsibility for "Indians and Lands reserved for Indians." The dwindling population of native people in Ontario generally stayed on their reserves practising farming in the south and chiefly hunting, fishing or guiding in the north. Their way of life and standard of living was, for a time, not markedly different from their non-Indian neighbours.

But after 1914-1918, two developments began that altered social relationships. The population of Indians began to increase, so that simply through numbers their presence in local communities became more prominent. Secondly, many Indians, like many farmers in Ontario, abandoned or reduced their agricultural efforts, but, in contrast, they did not migrate in large numbers to urban areas or adapt to the new industrial life. Consequently, the gap between the standard of living on the average reserve and the normal Ontario standard widened to an alarming extent. Poverty is often a matter of contrast, and the Indians began to be seen as an impoverished people. Increased numbers

of native people appeared in urban areas and some settled in poor housing and slum conditions on the edges of villages and towns. For reasons we cannot presume to elucidate here, native leaders and interested or affected non-Indians began to perceive that a complex of social problems existed.

Harry C. Nixon of Brantford, because of the large Indian population in or near his constituency, was active in presenting these problems to the legislature. William Goodfellow, Minister of Welfare, was sympathetic. As a result, in 1953 Goodfellow headed a Select Committee of eleven MPPs "to study the entire matter of civil liberties with respect to the Indian population of Ontario and to consider all matters which the Committee may consider relevant to the present status of Indians in Ontario towards the end that they may enjoy improved standards of living and equality of opportunity."

The committee was generous in its recommendations, advocating that Indians be entitled to vote in provincial elections, be entitled to buy alcohol and be given better educational opportunities. In regard to welfare, they noted that the federal and provincial governments, already sharing the cost of provincially administered Old Age Assistance and Blind Persons Allowances, would probably extend the new Disabled Persons Allowance to native people. They recommended that the Province and the Federal Indian Affairs Branch agree to provide homes for the aged and the services of children's aid societies on the reserves.

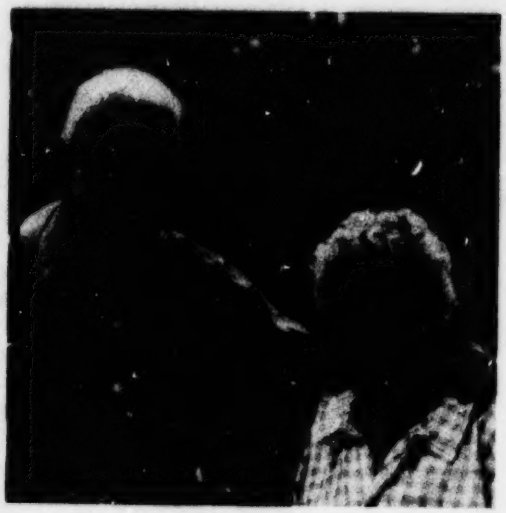
In the committee's report, and in the discussions that followed, the general assumption was—at least among non-Indians—that the goal was "integration of the Indian with the rest of the community." They thought that with full equality of opportunity and a willingness to "leave the protective shelter" of federal aid, native people would enjoy the prosperous way of life typical of 1950 Ontario. "The time is not far off when the Indian will take his rightful place alongside his non-Indian neighbour with full equality—neither maintaining his present exceptional benefits nor his now almost imaginary disadvantages."

The committee members could not have imagined that a day would come when remarks like this might be labelled "cultural genocide" and the goal would be the heightening of the differences between the native person and the white man. Segregation with aboriginal rights and sovereignty, as against assimilation or some form of integration, were not then perceived as radically divergent paths to the future.

The 1953 "Report on Civil Liberties and Rights of Indians" was one that was almost totally translated into the recommended actions. The Indian Welfare Services Act of 1955 went beyond the

The Department and the native people working together have achieved gratifying local successes in specific projects, such as this technical training program in Brantford in 1962.

Native families, both young and old, have benefitted from the Department's efforts and provincial programs on their behalf.



report, stating that Mothers' Allowances, Old Age Assistance and Blind and Disabled Persons Allowances were available to Indians "to the same extent as any other person."

In Mothers' Allowances, one point of discrimination later emerged and then was hastily erased. A year after Indian women became eligible under the Mothers' Allowance Act, the Act was broadened to admit as eligible the mother whose child was born out of wedlock. Reports from field staff intimated that this prospect of a substantial income tempted unmarried Indian women to produce babies. Whether this was true or not, the Indian Welfare Services Act was amended in March, 1958, restricting the allowance to Indian mothers who were widowed or had a "dependent father" as a legal spouse. Four years later, in December, 1962, the Act was again amended to strike out the restriction and return to the wording of 1955.

As recommended also, Children's Aid authority and service became effective on Indian reserves. Soon, most societies in northern Ontario had a disproportionate number of Indian cases. On the whole, both the societies and the band councils would probably have judged the child welfare service as necessary and valuable, but the relation between the two sets of authorities was uneasy. Differences in perceptions as to what constitutes child neglect and abuse, the scarcity of Indian foster homes deemed suitable by the societies, the disturbed social and family conditions in some communities, the removal of Indian children from native to non-native settings and other factors have continued to be sources of discontent, though in general the arrangements have endured.

The recommendation for promotion and support of Indian homes for the aged, despite goodwill and several sincere endeavours has had no success. The basic problem is that few reserves have had a population of enfeebled aged large enough to justify building a full-fledged modern institution, and elderly native people are as little inclined as other people to move to some distant locality. A nursing home type of centre on Manitoulin Island has, however, rendered good service through the years. If they wish, native people are admitted to this centre and other municipal homes on the same basis as anyone else. As for other residents from municipally unorganized areas, the Province pays the full cost.

The 1953 report was only the beginning of a continuing relationship in which the requests of Indian band councils and other groups are chanelled to the Ontario and Federal governments. An Indian Advisory Committee was convened in early 1956 that met frequently with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Public Welfare, that visited in the course of time most of the reserves, and that conveyed to government the view of Ontario natives on a large range of issues. Headed by Elliott

Moses, a Chief of the Six Nations, the committee was an active and influential group, still functioning effectively through Department auspices fifteen years later in 1970.

We have described in another section one of the most progressive steps the Department undertook towards enhancing the status of Indian band councils; the granting to them as of April 1, 1960, the authority to administer the General Welfare Assistance Act on the same basis as a municipal government. In 1966, this was augmented by a new provision of the Day Nurseries Act offering provincial capital and operating subsidies to open day nurseries. For social welfare purposes, the distinction between municipalities and reserves had been potentially eliminated. Public welfare was in many ways the foremost Department in recognizing the ability of Indian band councils to rise to the responsibilities of a local government.

The Department now went forward into what was to prove to be the much more controversial field of "Indian community development." As the label implies, this was an effort to improve Indian communities, but one not restricted to the operation of orthodox social welfare services, rather endeavouring to assist wherever there were obvious deficiencies in health, housing, housekeeping, employment, economic activity, communications, communal utilities and personal conduct or relationships. The Department did not attempt to improve everything at once. On the other hand, the field staff did not exclude any problem from their responsibility to seek solutions.

In 1960, band councils required advice concerning the establishment of administrative offices and staff in order to exercise their opportunity to control local General Welfare Assistance. A former head of the Old Age Pension Commission, the energetic and aggressive S.N. Asbury, returned to the Department and was appointed in December, 1959, as executive officer in liaison with the Indians. In addition to setting up band welfare administrations, Asbury began the first community development focussing attention on Indian settlements in northern Ontario outside the reserves where the difficulties were most troublesome.

The Department and the native people working together, usually with the willing assistance of the municipality involved, achieved gratifying local success in specific projects. At Red Lake many native families were provided with much needed new accommodation. Jobs were found for native people in greater numbers in local industries. Similarly, in Armstrong and Aroland and other small places along the northern line of the Canadian National Railway, the housing, water supply and other utilities were modernized. The field staff reported numerous opportunities for improving conditions at moderate cost. The senior departmental officials, including Minister John Yaremko and Deputy Minister Band, were interested in and optimistic about Indian community development.

In November, 1963, a federal-provincial conference, including the Prime Minister and provincial premiers, discussed policy towards the native peoples which had become a national question. In October, 1964, a second conference resulted in a federal offer to provide most of the money where a province undertook to administer welfare or development services to registered Indians. Ontario, alone among the provinces, accepted both challenges. In January, 1966, a welfare services agreement and an Indian development agreement were signed between Ontario and Canada.

The former, in effect, confirmed the Ontario policy of the equal provision of all welfare services to all provincial residents, including native people. The Federal Government would pay a rate of subsidy proportioned according to how much the use of welfare services by Indians exceeded the use by the rest of the population. In practice, this meant a federal subsidy of about 93 per cent of expenditures.

The Indian development agreement was more novel. Its aim was to improve "the economic, social and cultural life of Indians...." The understanding was that the federal payment would be 90 per cent of the cost of approved projects, including operating and capital costs, initiated by Ontario.

Immediately, in early 1966, the Department established an Indian Development Branch with a Director, Joseph Dufour, and a staff of seventeen, ten of whom were field officers. A budget of nearly

In 1969, the new federal-provincial agreement on Indian development "fell to the ground" in the words of Premier Roberts. On May 16, the director and most of the staff of the Department's Indian Development Branch resigned and a protest was held to demand that the branch be allowed to deliver the promised services. *(Ken Robinson)*

$1.5 million was allocated for the next fiscal year. The branch proposed five substantial development projects, and the Department sent these forward for federal sanction.

At once, trouble broke out. The federal minister had been replaced, and the new interpretation of the agreement was that Ottawa was not committed to subsidize any capital costs. As for operating costs, only the salaries and travelling expenses of the community development offices would be shared. For the five projects estimated to require $1 million, the federal share would be $31,900. Long and increasingly bitter negotiations failed to restore any acceptable basis for financing development. As Premier Robarts of Ontario later explained to the legislature, the Indian Development agreement "fell to the ground," and the Province would not unilaterally fund such services to Indians who were, constitutionally, a federal responsibility.

But the native organizations, particularly the Union of Ontario Indians, were keyed up to action and eager to proceed with the projects. They knew that money was allocated in the Department's budget and did not regard the federal refusal as any excuse for delay. The branch director took the same stance and expressed increasing frustration as his proposals, one by one, were relegated to inactivity.

When the Department's estimates came forward for the normal debate in the legislature in May, 1969, the Opposition seized upon the fact that, despite all promises and expectations, only $200,000 had been spent out of the $1.5 million voted for the past year. There was prolonged protest and argument, and the estimates required an unprecedented fifty hours to pass, chiefly because of criticism of the handling of Indian development. The Minister, struggling nearly alone amid the uproar, did not make as clear and convincing an explanation as the circumstances justified and left not only his political critics, but also the native people and the branch staff unsatisfied.

This was on May 6, and five days later, Branch Director Joseph Dufour, in a highly unorthodox step, wrote to Premier Robarts and Minister John Yaremko proposing abrupt shifts in government policy that would enable the branch to deliver community development services effectively. The memorandum requested a reply within three days and had the air of an ultimatum from a civil servant to his political masters. No reply was forthcoming by the May 15 deadline.

The Toronto newspapers of May 16 were blazoned with front page headlines: "Indian Welfare Staff Resigns. House in Uproar". The branch director and seven out of ten of his field development officers had that day sent in their resignations and held a press conference to publicize their grievances. The representative of the Union of Ontario Indians resigned from the Minister's Indian Advisory Committee and supported the dissidents. On May 20 there was a protest parade at Queen's Park, and about 100 persons, former branch staff, natives and sympathizers, circled in front of the Legislative Building for an hour or two. The event was notable only in that it was the first occasion departmental staff staged a public outburst against departmental action, or rather, inaction. This was not the kind of issue that would excite any large numbers of the voting public, and many Indians were themselves indifferent.

The Opposition believed that the Minister had misled the House and put forward a formal resolution of censure. The resolution was debated in the legislature on May 22, 1969. After the Opposition speeches, Premier Robarts' reply was firm and uncompromising. He explained clearly the collapse of the federal-provincial agreement, stated that Ontario would fund special projects for Indians only on a limited and discretionary basis and intimated that native community development would be moved from welfare to the wider jurisdiction of a citizenship department. The government majority then defeated the motion of censure, and the few days of excitement came to an end.

The Indian Development Branch with a new director, a reduced staff and budget remained in the Department of Social and Family Services to the end of the fiscal year. As of April 1, 1970, it was transferred to the newly formed Department of Culture and Recreation.

Social and Family Services continued to maintain extensive and beneficial relations with thousands of native people through its regular income maintenance and social service programs, though community development was removed. The Department had played a large and original part in stimulating the native people to an intense consciousness of their collective needs and desires and towards the importance of raising the vital questions of their future place in Canadian society—questions still highly controversial and mainly unresolved.

Chapter 18

A REVIEW OF THE PERIOD: 1950-1970

The peak of progress in the Department during two decades of unprecedented improvement was appropriately in the Canadian Centennial year of 1967. New agreements had just been reached with the federal government in relation to the Canada Assistance Plan; these were being implemented and further independent initiatives by the province were coming to fruition. In 1966 and 1967, ten Acts administered by the Department passed through the legislature for amendment, and dozens of pages of revised regulations were written, increasing rates of allowances and subsidies and offering new services and benefits.

The economy of the Province remained prosperous, at the height and near the end of a long run of good times. Government, business and the population in general expressed an optimistic and expansionist mood. Resources were abundant for the improvement of all aspects of public life, and the new social service programs seemed assured of adequate funding.

This was fortunate because departmental expenditure immediately began to rise at an accelerating rate. In 1965, total costs had been $132,611,786. In 1969, when the new rates and adjustments had taken full effect, the expenditure was $256,610,121, a rise of over 93 per cent in four years. Such a rate of increase had not been witnessed since Depression times, and it was not explicable, as were the gargantuan budget leaps of the 1970-80 decade, by the addition of entire new fields to the Ministry's jurisdiction, because the core of established programs remained essentially the same during the four years.

The massive increase swelled out from income maintenance programs, especially from Family Benefits Allowances. The costs for these more than doubled in a brief period, from $57 million in 1965 to over $116 million in 1969. Family Benefits included provisions for the aged and disabled, but costs in these areas actually declined because the lowering of age limits for federal Old Age Security from seventy to sixty-five was rapidly phasing out the provincial Old Age Assistance case-load. It was the maintenance paid to mothers with dependent children, the former Mothers' Allowances, that accounted for the larger part of the upsurge in expenditures. Families were coming onto the case-load at an astonishing rate: there had been 10,000 cases at the end of 1965; there were 20,428 by 1969.

Some part of this influx was due to wider eligibility for Family Benefits; from 1966 onwards wives separated from their husbands but not deserted in a legal sense were accepted as recipients. Some part of the cost rise was due to higher rates paid by the government in recognition of higher living costs caused by inflation and to a more generous allotment. (Real purchasing power of the allowances rose by as much as 50 per cent in the 1960s.) A great part of this increase was due to a change in the social attitudes of influential sections of Canadian society that affected the total operations of the Department in all its spheres of activity.

A sociological analysis of this attitudinal change is beyond our purview here but the moral and eventually the political shift must be noted if we are to gain a better understanding of the Department in this period.

The movement that began in the enthusiasms and resentments of the 1960s could be interpreted as more a manifestation of adolescence than of anything else. The population of North America and of Ontario comprised a greater proportion of young people in their teens and twenties than ever before. This was a generation raised in prosperity, well educated, liberated from parental discipline and from many former conventions, and with high expectations. The novel attitudinal displays and behaviour that attracted attention largely seemed to express the overstated idealism of youth, as well as the normal disillusionment of the young on discovering the difference between

the world as it is and as it has been presented. The new life style of many was a combination of fervent protest and youthful self indulgence.

Distrust of the establishment and the deluge of "new" rights demanded vast, if vague, social reform. The social authorities generally responded benevolently, perhaps timidly, to the unaccustomed vehemence of non-negotiable demands. There was a concomitant discontent in those groups in society that regarded themselves as oppressed or disadvantaged, denied their rights to a share in the good life of the majority. "Minority rights" was another slogan used by the *avant-garde*.

This agitation is mentioned here because it had specific effects on public welfare services in Ontario, as in practically every province and state. Outstanding among the minorities were the poor, particularly those receiving or hoping to receive public aid. For the first time, welfare recipients shed their sense of shame or inferiority and groups of them confronted the social service authorities. In a short time clients rights groups and poor people's organizations were approaching government aggressively at every level. At first, actions and reactions on both sides were exaggerated: suspicion and hostility on the part of the organizations, indignation and rejection from the welfare authorities. There were welfare demonstrations, protest meetings, sit-ins in municipal and Ministry offices.

The tension between poor people and public welfare people reached its crescendo about 1970 and thereafter slackened rapidly. As was said by a Department director in retrospect:

> *But after the first bursts of indignation, both sides began to compromise; clients began to appear on panels at* OMSSA *conferences to tell us what we were doing wrong. Agitators got off the soap box and onto the agenda. Anti-poverty organizations accepted government grants and sent delegates to welfare conventions. Recipients formed advisory councils and counselled social service staff on their responsibilities. Guidelines on administration were written and accepted by municipalities and the Ministry.*[1]

In general, government response was sympathetic if somewhat belated. The American government formulated the idea of a war on poverty, implementing many projects aimed at the ideal of eliminating poverty from society. The idea was adopted in Canada mainly at the federal level, and a series of conferences with the provinces began. In both nations, no deep changes in the economic or social systems were contemplated, and the strategy was to redistribute income through taxation and increased employment opportunities.

In Canada, the chief practical outcomes were the Canada Pension Plan and the Canada Assistance Plan, along with the public health insurance. If they did not banish poverty, at least they helped eliminate the last vestiges of destitution.

In Ontario, one response was the establishment of a Social Assistance Review Board in 1968. This was an impartial tribunal (though reporting to the Minister of Social and Family Services) to which any recipient of or applicant for Family Benefits or General Assistance could appeal any decision of a provincial or municipal administrator.

Less obtrusive but important was the implementation of standards of administration in municipal and provincial offices that accorded more tactful and respectful treatment to distressed persons. On the negative side, there was more legalism and red tape. The attempts of client advocates to take advantage of loopholes in the law and the implementation of civil rights safeguards had prompted stricter legislation and elaborate paper procedures. The former discretion allowed to administrators, used more often than not in the applicant's favour, largely disappeared.

A real and lasting victory for the poor and disadvantaged in Ontario was in the wide and deep improvements in the quality and quantity of Department programs that had been developed from 1950 forwards, culminating in the achievements of 1967.

By an irony of fate in this culminative year, the administrative leader of this march of progress was severely stricken with illness while in office. Deputy Minister Band suffered a stroke and heart seizure in December, 1969, and was unable to return to full duty for five months. In the interim, Merian Borczak was Acting Deputy Minister under Minister John Yaremko during a difficult period when the Department came under adverse public and political criticism on the issues of Indian community development. Dr. Band was able to return in May, 1968, and carried on until, reaching

The peak of progress in the Department during two decades of unprecedented improvement was the Canadian Centennial year of 1967 when The Honourable John Yaremko was Minister. Shown here in 1966 being sworn into office, the Minister is flanked by Premier Robarts. ***(Ontario Archives)***

his sixty-fifth year, he relinquished the position as of July 31, 1969. It is pleasant to record that he was immediately appointed Chairman of the Social Assistance Review Board, a position he held for four years.

James Band's career of fifty years is contemporaneous with nearly the total history of the Department of Public Welfare. The most productive period of the Department in terms of volume and variety of services was during his years of administrative leadership in the 1950s and 1960s. A review of these two decades can only highlight the major accomplishments.

Between 1952 and 1969, eighteen new Acts were passed, each inaugurating public programs that were original in Ontario and sometimes unique in North America. Many of these acts introduced not one but a whole set of varied benefits. The General Welfare Assistance Act, for example, added to its basic component of unemployment relief the first publicly supported nursing home care, the rehabilitative program of "work activity," provision for professional counselling, a long list of medical and domestic items under "special assistance," as well as auxiliary issuance under supplementary aid, hostel care and staff training support.

The two dozen old or new Acts under department jurisdiction in 1967 had all been improved by amendments year by year. The terms of eligibility had been broadened so that thousands of cases of income maintenance had transferred from municipal to provincial responsibility. Broadly speaking, the municipalities had been relieved of all long term allowances, though in return they accepted partnership in numerous other social service responsibilities. The rates of living allowances had been progressively raised, so that at the time Ontario's payments to persons in need were in the top rank among Canadian provinces. Recipients made real gains in purchasing power in these decades. Agencies and local governments gained also as the rate of provincial subsidization was pushed upward from 50 per cent to a high of 80 per cent for municipal programs. The number of buildings constructed for welfare purposes–homes for the aged; homes for the blind, the disabled, the retarded; children's treatment centres; and care centres for the addicted, the maladjusted, the

transients–far exceeded anything seen before or since. The half dozen basic programs inherited from prior years were transformed in this period, and added to these were at least twelve more large programs of a basic and permanent nature.

A host of other benefits was inaugurated as aspects of this general burgeoning of provincial social services throughout Ontario society. We may cite the wide extension of medical and dental care for recipients, the improvements in day care for children, the extraordinary provisions for Indians, the community services for the aged, family and credit counselling, sheltered workshops, homemakers and nurses services, and participation in legal aid.

Besides this, there were imaginative initiatives taken to explore causal and preventive factors in welfare dependency. Geriatric and gerontological research was instituted through a medical unit at Christie Street and a special ward in a Toronto hospital, through a twenty year study of aging, and through the promotion of a legislative committee on the condition of the aged population, followed by the setting up of a departmental office on aging.

Beyond the large vocational rehabilitation program permanently established in 1955, there were experimental projects in personal restoration, such as the "over 50 unit" in Toronto and advisory and placement assistance for families on Mothers' Allowances. Successful experiments in promoting adoption of children by television and newspaper advertisements became a continuing and widely copied feature of departmental efforts. A research and demonstration program funded many agency and municipal ventures, particularly referral offices to guide people with problems to the appropriate helping organizations and community service centres that combined public, private, municipal, provincial and federal representatives in a single location. Near the end of the period, the Department formed a full fledged research branch to integrate the manifold attempts to apply the knowledge and benefits of social science to the Department's wide ranging programs and increasing concern for progressive improvement in aid of the poor, the troubled and the disadvantaged.

Our summary of accomplishments must notice the administrative advances in these twenty years. Throughout this time, the organizational structure of the Department remained remarkably stable. Progress was facilitated simply by the addition of new branches when warranted by new programs. The morale and dedication of staff were kept at a high level by promotion from within department ranks, though when special knowledge or skills were needed there were outside recruitments.

Yet, during this time the Department did institute changes that were of lasting value. An efficient field structure of seventeen regional offices covering all areas of the province was completed so that headquarters and field delivery worked together in smooth coordination. Relationships between municipal and departmental staff and administration were improved beyond all measure. Private charitable organizations, old and new, were integrated into the system in ways that developed their contribution while preserving their autonomy and goodwill. The formation of county and district welfare units, unifying the heterogenous social service efforts of more than 500 municipalities, stands out as a political and administrative achievement of the highest order.

This summary of achievements over less than twenty years does not include the wide ranging improvements in social service education and relations with Ontario's native people that have already been covered in depth in previous chapters. The total of this active period presents a proud record. Between 1952 and 1969, the Department grew to full maturity and assumed a position of leadership among public social service jurisdictions on this continent. It was a model for the future to emulate and an inspiration to all who remember this period of progress.

Chapter 19

EPILOGUE: THE DECADE OF REORGANIZATION

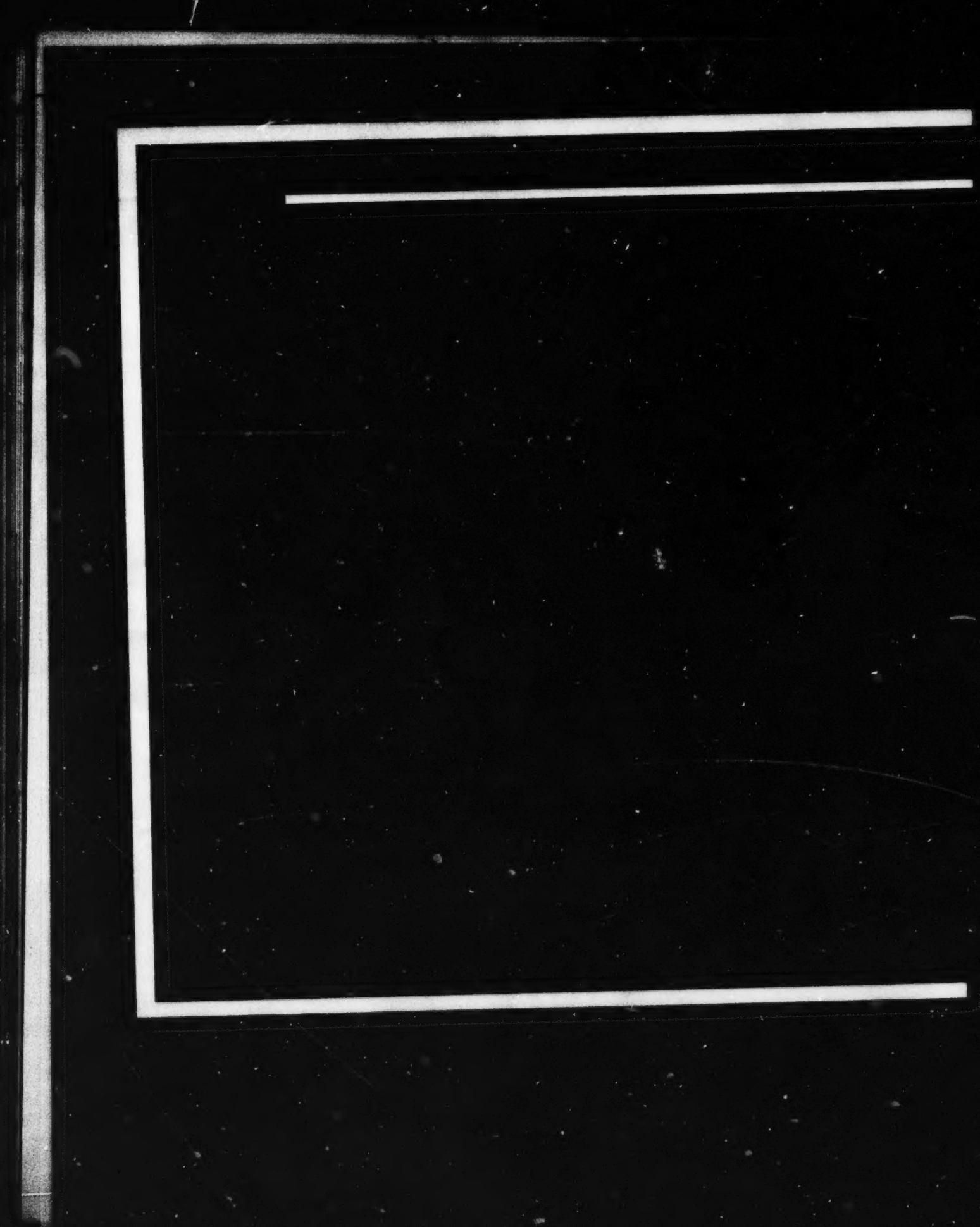
Two events in 1969 marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new one in the history of the Department. Deputy Minister James Band retired on July 31st, succeeded by Merian Borzak. During his long career, Band had been a dynamic and guiding spirit in the Department, and he left behind an important legacy in programs and attitudes.[1] In December of the same year the Committee on Government Productivity (COGP) convened, and its tenth and final report was issued in March of 1973. The committee was responsible for a massive reorganization of the Ontario Government, and the results were strongly felt in the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

The most apparent effect of COGP was a tremendous influx of programs, people and money. Sports and Recreation came to the Department from the Ministry of Education; Community and Indian Development and the Office of the Athletic Commissioner were all transferred from the Provincial Secretary; and mental retardation programs arrived from the Ministry of Health. From a staff of about 2,000 the Department's complement suddenly grew to nearly 12,000, and the budget increased by approximately $300 million.

The marriage of these diversified programs with those already in place caused great strain on departmental organization. Although the Ministry had functioned well in the past with a centralized administration, it now became necessary to transfer many functions to the field. Decentralization began in 1975 under Deputy Minister Dorothea Crittenden and was accelerated in 1978, with expanded children's programs, under Deputy Minister Robert D. Carman and Associate Deputy Minister Judge George Thomson. In 1982, Carman was succeeded by Robert M. McDonald, who has continued to decentralize, while at the same time introducing practices to ensure coordination of activities.

The activities and results of the Ministry's efforts to attain these program objectives, as well as the goals of reorganization, decentralization and restraint, merit a description and evaluation far more extensive than can be offered here. In fact, the passage of time will show that this fifth decade in the history of the Ministry will require considerable further research and the writing of another book to deal with it adequately. All that remains is to mention the significant events that marked this period.

After more than thirty-five years in the Department, Dr. Dorothea Crittenden was appointed as the Department's first woman Deputy-Minister in January, 1974.



Footnotes

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1. *The Globe and Mail* (August 11, 1930).
2. *Ibid* (March 27, 1931).

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2. *From an untitled newspaper clipping in "Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings" kept by J.J. Kelso,* volume of 1919-1920, housed in the library of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, p. 82.
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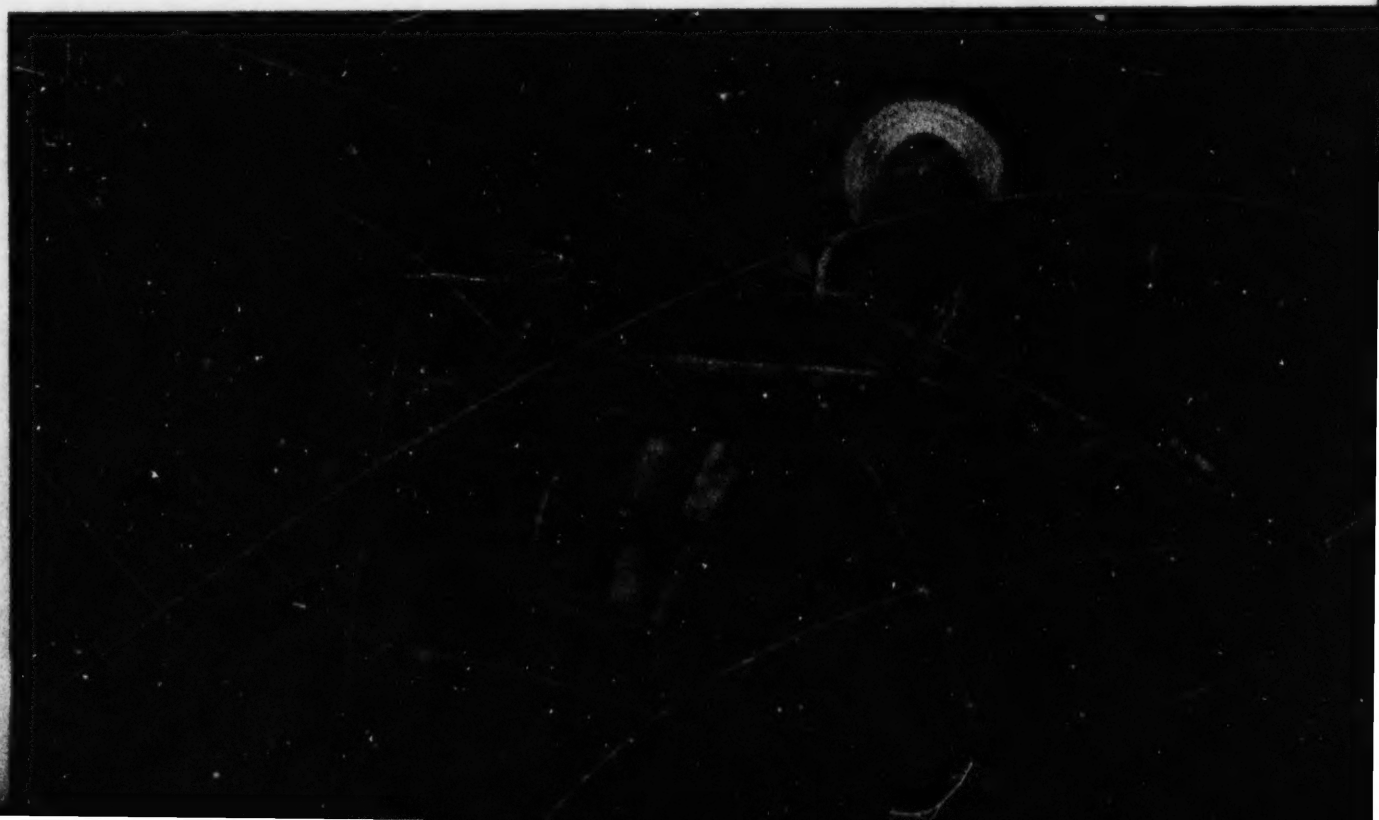

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Photographs have been selected for their historical content, consequently no special attempt has been made to repair any flaws. We are grateful to Kim Michasiw for his diligent detective work.

AB

Ontario
Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

The Honourable Frank Drea
Minister

Robert M. McDonald
Deputy Minister

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